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ABSTRACT

This booklet highlights instructive work and experiences from four demonstration charter schools in Chicago that have developed unique, mission-based accountability measures for their performance contracts with the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. These schools developed their new accountability measures between June 1998 and January 2000. The learning standards and alternative assessments developed by these schools (unique learning measures) augment state and district accountability requirements governing Chicago's charters. They do so by offering ways to gauge and demonstrate attainment of vital school goals that are not readily or adequately measured by standardized assessment. Five sections present "Overview of Chicago's Charter School Standards and Assessment Project"; "Unique Learning Measures Created by Chicago's Demonstration Charter Schools"; "Tools from Chicago's Charter School Standards and Assessment Project"; "Participants' Reflections and Lessons Learned"; and "Reflections for Charter Authorities and Policy Leaders." Six appendixes present a glossary, an evaluation tool for school-developed assessments, sample tools for unique learning measures, federal resources, National Charter School Accountability Network, and standards and assessment resources. (SM)

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MEASURING UP

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HOW CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS MAKE THEIR MISSIONS COUNT

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A PUBLICATION OF
LEADERSHIP FOR QUALITY EDUCATION, (LQE)
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

BY MARGARET Y. LIN

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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"SCHOOL-DEVELOPED, EXTERNALLY VALIDATED LEARNING MEASURES ADD DEPTH TO THE ACCOUNTABILITY COMPACT BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND THEIR AUTHORIZING AGENCY. THEY CAN BE A PARTICULARLY POWERFUL TOOL...WHERE THE CHARTER AUTHORIZER IS WILLING TO GIVE SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT TO PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OTHER THAN STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES."

Greg Richmond
Director, Chicago Public Schools' Charter Schools Office

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INTRODUCTION

"We want to enable our kids to be competitive with students who have a lot more advantages in life. How our kids perform on standardized tests is one part of that, but it's far from the essence or driving goal of our school. Our entire school community – teachers, students, parents – understands the power of our educational program, and people who visit our school see and feel it right away, too. But we have to be able to explain our successes to many people who aren't able to roam our school halls or personally witness the remarkable progress of our kids."

Kimberlie Day,
Co-Director, Perspectives Charter School, Chicago, IL

Perspectives Charter School's challenge is shared by many charter schools across the country. Charter schools are performance-based public schools that must demonstrate educational effectiveness in order to remain open, and most have far-reaching, ambitious missions. Yet their performance is typically judged on the basis of standardized tests that cannot capture the range and depth of student learning cultivated by many schools.

Countless schools across the country are deeply committed to nurturing student growth in areas where success is difficult to measure and demonstrate – whether because it is typically described only in subjective, anecdotal, or "fuzzy" terms, or because conventional standards and assessments for a particular subject or skill are crude. However, a school's successes in areas that are difficult to assess by standardized tests usually count for nothing in the world of high-stakes school accountability.

Because charter schools can be closed if they fail to perform as promised, they are subject to a level of accountability previously unseen in public education. Understandably, many charter schools do not want to be judged by standardized test results alone. They are acutely aware that many of their most important educational goals do not lend themselves readily to clear, objective measurement that is as credible as standardized testing to parents, public officials, the media, and the public at large. Thus, finding credible ways to gauge and report progress toward essential learning goals that are not traditionally measured is a compelling aim for many charter schools.

Chicago's charter schools have tackled this challenge. They acknowledge the utility of standardized tests for gauging student learning of certain skills and content. At the same time, they aim to achieve many other goals that can be difficult to measure. For example, Chicago's charters – like many schools across the country – focus on building students' character and sense of civic responsibility; developing effective writers and public speakers; cultivating artistic talent; giving students opportunities to exercise leadership and improve their worlds through community service, or to achieve in real-world workplaces; and transforming alienated youths' attitudes toward school, work, and life. These are powerful goals, vital to the missions of many charter schools. Their challenge, as Perspectives' co-director Kim Day explains it, is "how to translate essentially qualitative goals into quantitative measures that the public can easily understand." In other words, how can these schools make their missions *count*?

This booklet highlights instructive work and experiences from four demonstration charter schools in Chicago that have developed unique, mission-based accountability measures for their performance contracts with the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. These schools developed their new accountability measures between June 1998 and January 2000, with guidance and support from Chicago's Charter School Standards & Assessment Project – an initiative co-sponsored by the Chicago Public Schools and Leadership for Quality Education, a school reform group and resource center for charter schools in Chicago and the metropolitan area.

The learning standards and alternative assessments developed by these schools – to be called ***Unique Learning Measures*** in this booklet – augment the state and district accountability requirements governing Chicago's charters. They do so by offering ways to gauge and demonstrate attainment of vital school goals that are not readily or adequately measured by standardized assessments. By incorporating these measures in their Accountability Agreements with the Chicago district, the schools ensure that their achievements beyond standardized test results will carry some weight in their performance evaluations and charter renewal decisions.

Under the Standards & Assessment Project, two schools have developed ways to measure and report on students' social, personal and character development – a domain weakly addressed in the state standards and not easily assessed by traditional means. The other two schools have developed standards and assessments for communication skills, exceeding and refining the state standards and creating deeper, more comprehensive assessments for those skills.

This booklet offers "lessons learned" and ideas from all of Chicago's demonstration charters that may help other schools striving to develop solid accountability measures for important educational goals not addressed by traditional assessments. The leaders and staff of Chicago's demonstration schools do not view themselves as "expert" or authorities in the development of mission-based standards and assessments. However, they have learned a great deal from developing Unique Learning Measures for their Accountability Agreements, and they hope that other schools can benefit from their experiences.

We hope the examples and thoughts offered in this booklet will be helpful to all charter schools that wish to align their performance contracts with their rich, ambitious missions. At the same time, we hope these pages will also be useful for charter authorizers, district-run schools and education officials, demonstrating the possibilities of creating solid accountability agreements that give force to the missions of diverse performance-based schools.

The content of this publication is drawn from interviews with the faculty and consultants who worked together to develop Unique Learning Measures at Chicago's demonstration schools; project reports prepared by each school detailing the Unique Learning Measures and assessment instruments they have developed; reports prepared by Standards & Assessment Project manager Sharon Damore; and interviews with Sharon Damore and Greg Richmond, director of CPS' Charter Schools Office.

We begin this booklet with an overview of Chicago's Charter School Standards & Assessment Project, explaining the impetus for and development of this endeavor, as well as the weight Unique Learning Measures will carry in Accountability Agreements with the Chicago school board. Following the overview are descriptions of the Unique Learning Measures created by the four demonstration charter schools, along with a framework and guiding questions that helped these schools develop their unique performance measures. Next, we present a collection of reflections and lessons learned from the school leaders, teachers, and consultants who worked together to craft these measures. The booklet ends with a few reflections specifically for charter authorizers and educational policy leaders interested in giving schools the opportunity to develop and apply externally validated, mission-based learning measures to augment traditional, narrower indicators of performance.

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OVERVIEW OF CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOL
STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT PROJECT

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CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

The Accountability Agreement between the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees and Chicago's charter schools provides a predictable, objective, apolitical basis for the evaluation of each school's performance. The Agreement sets forth ten mandatory indicators of academic, financial, and management performance by which all charters will be judged. Among these is performance on state- and district-required standardized tests – both absolute scores and students' year-to-year gains.

At the same time, the Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) Charter Schools Office recognizes the inability of standardized tests to capture and convey many important dimensions of student learning. Thus, charter schools have the option of developing an eleventh performance indicator for their Accountability Agreements. If they wish, they may articulate clear standards, assessments, and performance targets for ***other goals on which they wished to be judged***. To be approved for its Accountability Agreement, a school's mission-based standards and assessments must be ***clear, comprehensible, objective, measurable, and externally credible***. Any school-developed standards and assessments – which will be called ***Unique Learning Measures*** in this booklet – approved by CPS' Charter Schools Office then become an eleventh performance indicator in that school's Accountability Agreement and are considered in formal evaluations of the school. If a school develops multiple Unique Learning Measures, this indicator will receive proportionately greater consideration in the school's performance reviews. (A more detailed explanation of the significance of Unique Learning Measures in school evaluations follows below.)

Although schools have had the option of developing Unique Learning Measures since Chicago's Charter School Accountability Agreement was initially negotiated in 1997, they found it difficult to develop measures that were sufficiently clear, objective, and externally credible. For this reason, in May 1998, CPS' Charter Schools Office and Leadership for Quality Education (LQE) – a school reform group that serves as a resource center for charter schools in Chicago – jointly organized Chicago's Charter School Standards & Assessment Project to help schools develop mission-based standards and assessments acceptable for inclusion in their performance-based contracts.

CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOL STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Phase I: June – December 1998

CPS' Charter Schools Office and LQE found the Standards & Assessment Project compelling for two major reasons. First, they believed it was important to help Chicago's charters provide a fuller, more informative picture of their educational achievements. Second, they hoped that the charter schools' creation of unique accountability measures could demonstrate credible, multidimensional ways to measure student learning for the Chicago School district and other public schools.

With funding from a consortium of local and national foundations, the Standards & Assessment Project provided a subgrant program to support Chicago's charter schools in developing Unique Learning Measures for their Accountability Agreements. The first subgrant program ran from June through December 1998, offering Chicago's charter schools grants of up to $13,500 each to develop original standards and assessments for as many subject areas or mission goals as they chose during that seven-month period. LQE created and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) that asked schools to explain the types of standards and assessments they hoped to develop, how they would accomplish the work, what purposes the subgrant would support (compensation for teachers' time on the project, consultants, etc.), and what additional resources or assistance they would need to accomplish their goals.

Chicago's charter schools welcomed this opportunity to develop accountability measures that would give weight to a fuller range of their school goals. Ten schools responded to that RFP and received subgrants of varying amounts, depending on the scope of work they proposed. This group included schools that were finishing up their first year of operation, schools slated to open in fall 1998, and schools planning to open in fall 1999.

LQE and CPS helped identify possible consultants and other resources to help the schools with their particular projects, but the school leaders and faculty were free to choose which consultants, if any, they would hire. In addition, CPS' Charter Schools Office made its own accountability consultant, Sharon Damore, available to guide and help all ten schools and their consultants through the Project.

The Standards & Assessment Project included meetings and workshops organized by LQE and CPS' Charter Schools Office to clarify the Project's goals to school leaders, staff, and consultants; enable Project participants to learn from other educators who had successfully developed standards and assessments in their schools; and provide a forum for exchanging ideas, progress, and concerns. The vast majority of the labor for the Project, however, took place within each charter school, where teachers and school leaders, sometimes assisted by consultants, worked tirelessly to identify ***what*** they most wanted to measure, ***how*** they could best measure and report student learning in those areas – and then began drafting and refining those Unique Learning Measures. The schools were free to organize their projects and carry out the work as they saw best, so long as they created acceptable measures by the end of December 1998.

Phase II: June 1999 – January 2000

In December 1998, the ten charter schools submitted their reports and proposed Unique Learning Measures to CPS. However, the ultimate goal proved to be more difficult than initially anticipated, and at that point, no school had developed measures sufficiently clear and externally credible for inclusion in its Accountability Agreement. Thus, CPS and LQE decided to support a second phase of the Standards & Assessment Project.

Most of the school leaders and teachers engaged in this Project were new to the experience and demands of creating standards and assessments that would be equally meaningful and useful both *inside* and *outside* the school. There was a considerable learning curve, and by winter 1998, most Project participants felt that they were just starting to see their way out of a forest of new ideas and expectations. For a few schools, leadership changes or overwhelming start-up challenges stood in the way of meeting the goals of the Standards & Assessment Project.

Furthermore, all ten schools found that their initial objectives for the Project were too broad. They had hoped to develop comprehensive accountability plans, with scores of learning standards aligned with state and district standards as well as multiple "authentic" assessments. As envisioned, the accountability plans would also include school-developed standards and assessments for learning goals not addressed by the state or district standards. These ambitions proved to be unrealistic in the midst of the endless other demands of running

or starting up a new charter school. With the help of CPS' Charter Schools Office and the Project consultant, all the schools narrowed the scope of their projects, selecting one or two existing goals or aspects of their missions on which to focus. Even after this was done, and school leaders and staff knew what they needed to do next, they found it almost impossible to find time to develop and refine their Unique Learning Measures in the midst of a busy school year.

With a new grant from the Walton Family Foundation, LQE was able to sponsor a second phase of the Standards & Assessment Project for up to five schools. In June 1999, LQE issued an RFP inviting schools to apply for grants to complete the development or refinement of Unique Learning Measures for their Accountability Agreements – to be submitted to CPS by January 2000. Those schools that developed acceptable measures would agree to serve as *demonstration* schools, sharing their work and learning with other schools across the country.

Only five schools applied for the Project's second phase and received grants of $8,000 each to continue work on their Unique Learning Measures. The other charters chose not to continue the project for a variety of reasons: the demands of school start-up, leadership changes, or the belief that the benefits of the project did not outweigh the costs (primarily teachers' time).

The Project's second phase was carried out similarly to the first. However, this time, Sharon Damore served as overall project manager, presenting workshops to school faculties, guiding the schools and their consultants toward CPS' expectations, reviewing and giving feedback on draft measures, and helping to identify other resources the schools might need. Dr. Damore also convened an Expert Review Committee, comprised of local and national experts in student assessment, to strengthen the external credibility of the Unique Learning Measures proposed by each school. The Expert Review Committee critiqued the schools' draft measures midway through the Project, provided recommendations to strengthen their validity and reliability, and critiqued the refined measures before final approval for the schools' Accountability Agreements.

Four Demonstration Schools

Of the five schools that received grants to continue the Standards & Assessment Project, four have created Unique Learning Measures now acceptable for their Accountability Agreements: North Kenwood/Oakland (NKO) Charter School, North Lawndale College Preparatory (NLCP) Charter High School, Perspectives Charter School, and Triumphant Charter School. This booklet features the work and learning of these four demonstration schools.

The Unique Learning Measures created by these schools extend and invigorate the state and district standards, giving them more depth and meaning. These original standards and assessments enable the schools to measure and demonstrate fulfillment of learning goals vital to each school that are only vaguely or poorly addressed in the state and Chicago standards.

Of these four schools, Perspectives and Triumphant were finishing their first year of operation when they first began creating Unique Learning Measures in June 1998. A year younger, North Kenwood/Oakland and North Lawndale College Prep opened in the fall of 1998, so they were just entering their start-up summer when the Standards & Assessment Project began.

Future Directions of the Standards & Assessment Project

As this publication goes to press, the demonstration schools are piloting their unique assessments for spring 2000, proctored by Standards & Assessment Project Manager Sharon Damore. Dr. Damore will help the schools determine appropriate administration processes as well as ways to further document reliability of the assessments. The schools are also developing systems to collect, analyze, apply and report performance results efficiently.

Though the Standards & Assessment Project has been challenging for all participants, Chicago's demonstration schools are convinced of the value and importance of developing Unique Learning Measures. They are searching for resources – time, expertise and funding – to continue developing externally credible measures in other areas of learning central to their missions. In addition, other charter schools in Chicago that did not complete both phases of the Standards & Assessment Project in 1998-2000 are interested in resuming their efforts. The measures developed by the demonstration schools should help pave the path for future work by sharing useful, instructive processes and providing examples of measures judged acceptable for Accountability Agreements with the Chicago school district.

Chicago's Framework for Developing Unique Learning Measures

CPS' Charter Schools Office developed the following six-step framework to guide schools in creating Unique Learning Measures (standards and aligned assessments) acceptable for inclusion in their Accountability Agreements with the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. To incorporate their Unique Learning Measures in their Accountability Agreements, schools must adequately articulate each of the items below:

1) Explain the ***Goal*** or ***Philosophy*** motivating the school in developing its particular Unique Learning Measure(s).

2) State the ***Unique Standard(s)***

3) Explain the ***Assessment(s)*** to be used to evaluate student progress toward each Standard.

4) Explain the ***Scoring System*** to be used for each Assessment.

5) Define the ***Minimum Student Score*** required to meet each Standard.

6) Define the ***Aggregate Performance Ranges (High, Middle, Low)*** that the school wishes to include in its Accountability Agreement for formal performance evaluation. These ranges set forth the percentages of students meeting or exceeding each Unique Standard that will earn the school a High, Middle, or Low rating for that part of its annual evaluation according to the Accountability Agreement.[1]

Each school may propose its own percentages for High, Middle, and Low ratings, subject to certain expectations and final approval from CPS' Charter Schools Office. For example, to receive a High rating for performance on any Unique Learning Measure, a school must demonstrate that at least 80% of its students meet or exceed the given standard.

How Do the Unique Learning Measures Count?

In reviewing each school's performance from year to year, the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees will consider performance on the school's Unique Learning Measures in the context of the school's overall record and pattern of improvement. It will not apply a specific formula assigning a predetermined weight to the Unique Learning Measures as compared to other achievement indicators. The Board is most interested in objective measures showing whether students are meeting national norms, and thus will continue to give primary consideration to each school's reading and math results on the norm-referenced standardized assessments used district-wide[2] – with strong attention to yearly student ***gains***. A school's performance on its Unique Learning Measures will not outweigh its showing on the norm-referenced assessments, but will receive significant secondary consideration.

Below are three possible scenarios that illustrate the impact the Unique Learning Measures may have on the academic performance reviews of charter schools in Chicago:

Scenario 1]
A school shows ***"borderline"*** performance on the norm-referenced tests (considering student gains as well as absolute scores) but demonstrates solid achievement on its Unique Learning Measures. The latter could tip the balance, helping the school avoid a negative review overall.

Scenario 2]
A school's performance on the norm-referenced assessments is *clearly* ***unsatisfactory*** to the Board, showing low absolute scores and little evidence of year-to-year growth. In this case, positive performance on the school's Unique Learning Measures will not be sufficient to earn the school a positive review.

Scenario 3]
A school demonstrates ***satisfactory progress*** on the norm-referenced assessments but does not meet its goals for its Unique Learning Measures. The latter weakness will not prevent the school from receiving a positive evaluation.

These examples show that developing Unique Learning Measures can only help Chicago's charter schools provide important evidence and a fuller picture of their productivity. Solid achievement on the Unique Learning Measures can make a difference for an otherwise marginally performing school, while low or unconvincing results on these measures will not damage a school's evaluation if it is performing positively on the norm-referenced assessments.

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UNIQUE LEARNING MEASURES
CREATED BY CHICAGO'S DEMONSTRATION
CHARTER SCHOOLS

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The following pages describe the Unique Learning Measures created by Chicago's four demonstration schools and provide a brief profile of each school. Following the explanation of each school's Unique Learning Measure(s) are descriptions of the human resources that the school devoted to its Standards & Assessment Project (in addition to the in-kind support and guidance offered by Standards & Assessment Project manager Sharon Damore) and areas where the school is continuing to develop Unique Learning Measures.

Examples of scoring tools and rubrics created by the demonstration schools for their Unique Learning Measures are reproduced in Appendix C.

NARRATIVE WRITING

North Kenwood/Oakland (NKO) Charter School focused its Standards & Assessment Project on refining a ***Narrative Writing Appraisal System*** and scoring guide for grades 3-8. This writing assessment had already been partially developed by the charter school's founders, educators at the University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement, before the school opened. NKO Charter School has also developed writing standards that support and extend state and district standards for students. The Narrative Writing Appraisal System measures student progress toward these standards, providing detailed diagnostic feedback to students, parents and teachers, and enabling teachers to tailor instruction carefully to students' needs.

Profile: North Kenwood/Oakland (NKO) Charter School

Background & Mission:
Founded by educators at the University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement (CSI), North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School provides a challenging curriculum for elementary and middle school students in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies — all with an arts emphasis. The school also serves as a Professional Development Center for teachers in other Chicago public schools. The school's directors are veteran educators who help to lead the Center for School Improvement.

Year Opened:
1998

Student Enrollment & Grades Served (1999-2000):
165 students in grades preK-2 and 5-6

Demographics:
99% African-American; 75% low-income[1]; 4% with special educational needs

School Directors:
Dr. Marv Hoffman and Dr. Barbara Williams

NKO Charter School's founding organization, the Center for School Improvement (CSI), has spent the past eight years working closely with a network of Chicago public schools to improve student literacy and has developed a strong Literacy Framework as part of this endeavor. At the core of CSI's school improvement approach is an ongoing assessment program designed to continually guide classroom instruction and ensure the progress

of all students. Creating the charter school provided the opportunity to elaborate on that work, instituting CSI's extensively researched curriculum and assessment program "from the ground up." CSI is working to develop equally strong assessment measures in areas beyond literacy, which will be used in the charter school as well as the other schools in CSI's network.

The scoring guide for NKO's Writing Appraisal System focuses on seven features of good narrative writing: focus, elaboration, organization, voice, word choice, construction of knowledge, and conventions. NKO will administer the Narrative Writing Appraisal in addition to standardized tests required by the state and district. The Narrative Writing Appraisal is designed to assess writing progress at multiple points during each school year, allowing NKO staff to diagnose and quickly address students' needs and ensure students' continual progress. In addition, the Appraisal offers more specific diagnoses than standardized tests, yielding greater information about student progress that teachers can use immediately to make instructional decisions.

Unique Learning Measures for Narrative Writing

Standards	Assessments (using Writing Appraisal System scoring guides)
Students will collaborate with peers, teachers and others to produce group writing projects.	Student work collected by the Work Sampling Portfolio System, Writers' Workshop, classroom presentations and collaborative writing projects.
Students will select their own topics, audiences, and purposes to complete writing projects with an expectation of publication.	Student work collected by the Work Sampling Portfolio System and Writers' Workshop.
Students will incorporate knowledge from reading, projects, experiments, and other learning experiences in the content areas and in literature into writing activities, both as sources for subject matter and as models of good writing.	Student work collected by the Work Sampling Portfolio System, Writers' Workshop, classroom presentations and collaborative writing projects, Rites of Passage portfolio, and "reading and writing across the curriculum" projects.

■ UNIQUE LEARNING MEASURES CREATED BY CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS

Performance Goal

80% of NKO students will demonstrate mastery in narrative writing by meeting or exceeding the minimum grade-level standard score for work assessed according to the seven-category Writing Appraisal System.

Aggregate Performance Ranges for CPS Rating

For NKO's Accountability Agreement, the school's rating on its Unique Learning Measures will be determined by the following percentages of all students who master NKO's Writing Standards.

- High – 80% or more meet or exceed the standards
- Middle – 50% - 79% meet or exceed the standards
- Low – Fewer than 50% meet or exceed the standards

Resources for the Project

To develop and refine its Narrative Writing Appraisal System, NKO Charter School assembled an assessment team comprised of writing assessment specialists, NKO faculty, and Literacy Coordinators (teachers) from eight other public schools in Chicago in the Center for School Improvement's (CSI) network. A member of the Center for School Improvement's senior staff provided in-kind project management, while another CSI associate – a writing assessment expert – guided and facilitated the assessment team's substantive work as a consultant.

Future Work

To complete a comprehensive writing assessment, North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School is piloting scoring guides for persuasive and expository writing in spring 2000. When these are refined, the school plans to add these measures to its Accountability Agreement in the 2000-2001 school year.

ORAL EXPRESSION

North Lawndale College Preparatory (NLCP) Charter High School has developed a Unique Standard and Assessment to judge student mastery of oral expression across the school's disciplines. NLCP's project team chose to focus on fluent speech because it is a crucial, permanent competency that students can carry throughout their lives. The school's goal is to enable all its students to learn to speak persuasively in a variety of life settings. To assess student progress toward this standard, the school has developed an evaluation tool focusing on the following five elements: coherence, grammar, audibility, fluency, and audience engagement.

Profile: North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School

Background & Mission:
Founded by Chicago's I Have A Dream Foundation, North Lawndale College Prep (NLCP) integrates high academic expectations with community service, work experience, and technology-based learning to encourage and prepare students in North Lawndale, one of Chicago's most economically disadvantaged communities, to attend and graduate from college.

Year Opened:
1998

Student Enrollment & Grades Served (1999-2000):
159 students in grades 9-10

Demographics:
100% African-American, 75% low-income, 8% with special educational needs; 2% Limited English Proficient

School Principal:
Robert Durrah

■ UNIQUE LEARNING MEASURES CREATED BY CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS

Unique Learning Measure for Oral Expression

Standard

Students will speak effectively in a variety of academic and professional settings.*

Performance Goal

75% of NLCP students will attain mastery level within two years.

Aggregate Performance Ranges for CPS Rating

For NLCP's Accountability Agreement, the school's rating on this measure will be determined by the following percentages of all students who master the standard within three years.

High – 80% or more meet or exceed the standard
Middle – 50% - 79% meet or exceed the standard
Low – Fewer than 50% meet or exceed the standard

*Within each of these broader performance standards, NLCP has created individualized, age-appropriate benchmarks.

NLCP plans to measure student progress toward meeting this standard by assessing Individual Oral Presentations. A common Oral Expression evaluation rubric, tested and refined for validity and interrater reliability, will be used for both formative and summative assessments. Oral Presentations will be scored by a team consisting of one NLCP teacher, one NLCP student, and one member of the non-teaching faculty, who will all be trained to use the rubric consistently with one another. External assessors – drawn from speech and communications faculty of local colleges and universities and perhaps from Mt. Holyoke College's Speaking, Arguing, and Writing Program – will view and assess randomly selected Oral Presentations, and their scoring on the rubric will be compared with that of the internal NLCP team to ensure external reliability in scoring. (The processes undertaken by this school and North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School to achieve consistency in scoring are described on pp. 45-46, under "Establishing Consistency and Reliability in Assessment Scoring Tools.")

Resources for the Project

NLCP's English faculty led the school's Standards & Assessment Project, while an education consultant provided substantive assistance and project management.

Future Work

NLCP's Standards & Assessment Project initially focused on developing standards and measures of literacy across the disciplines, driven by the belief that written and oral expression skills are prerequisites for student success in all courses, from social studies to science. The school drafted multiple standards for literacy but narrowed its focus to oral expression as time for this year's Project was running out. NLCP plans to refine and pilot other literacy standards and measures for addition to its Accountability Agreement next year.

SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: "A DISCIPLINED LIFE"

Perspectives Charter School has developed unique standards and assessments to measure and demonstrate students' social, personal and character development. Perspectives' educational program and school culture are centered on ***"A Disciplined Life,"*** a code of living based on 17 precepts to guide students through school as well as in life. The school's Unique Learning Measures are tied to these precepts, listed below, which define the social, moral, and ethical aspects of Perspectives' learning community:

Love who you are
Accept only quality work from yourself
Be punctual
Respect each other's intellect
Compliment others
Communicate effectively
Use your time wisely
Be open-minded
Listen actively
Be friendly
Solve conflicts personally
Be organized
Seek wisdom
Think critically
Take responsibility for your actions
Be generous
Be reflective

Profile: Perspectives Charter School

Background & Mission:
Perspectives Charter School is a middle and high school that emphasizes the development of students' personal, interpersonal, and global perspectives while forming intellectually reflective, caring and ethical students en route to a lifetime of meaningful work and contributions to society. The school's directors, who founded the school, previously co-led a small school within the Chicago Public Schools.

Year Opened:
1997

Student Enrollment & Grades Served (1999-2000):
150 students in grades 6-12

Demographics:
69% African-American; 28% Latino; 88% low-income; 14% with special educational needs

School Directors:
Kimberlie Day and Diana Shulla

Students at Perspectives will demonstrate attainment of the following standards – tied to particular precepts of *A Disciplined Life* – as measured by the assessments noted below. The assessments are major projects, oral presentations, and position papers. The school has created four detailed scoring guides or rubrics to evaluate student performance on each of these assessments: (1) *A Disciplined Life* Assessment rubric; (2) a Timeline rubric (focused on project planning and organization); (3) an Oral Presentation rubric; and (4) a Position Paper rubric.

Unique Learning Measures for A Disciplined Life

Standards	A Disciplined Life Precepts	Assessments
Students will develop an understanding and respect for cultural diversity and varied opinions. *(8th grade)*	• Respect each other's intellect • Be open-minded • Think critically	*Cultural Comparison Project* – evaluated by *A Disciplined Life* Assessment rubric
Students will identify the characteristics that are contained in quality work and utilize these characteristics to create and evaluate work. *(8th and 10th grades)*	• Accept only quality work from yourself • Communicate effectively	*8th Grade Cultural Comparison Project; 10th Grade Social Change Project/Oral Presentation* – evaluated by rubrics for *A Disciplined Life* Assessment, Oral Presentation, Position Paper, & Timeline
Students will demonstrate the ability to create a post-graduation plan to meet personal and academic goals. *(12th grade)*	• Seek wisdom • Be reflective • Be organized • Take responsibility for your actions • Use your time wisely	*"My Beyond Graduation Plan"/Oral Presentation, Position Paper* – evaluated by rubrics for Oral Presentation, Position Paper, and Timeline

Aggregate Performance Ranges for CPS Rating

For Perspectives' Accountability Agreement, the school's rating on its Unique Learning Measures will be determined by the following percentages of all Perspectives students attaining the *Disciplined Life* standards:

High – More than 85% of students meet or exceed the standards
Middle – 76% - 85% of students meet or exceed the standards
Low – 75% of students or fewer meet or exceed the standards

Resources for the Project

The entire teaching staff of Perspectives Charter School participated in developing its Unique Learning Measures, while an education consultant provided substantive help and project management.

Future Work

Perspectives Charter School plans to develop additional standards for A *Disciplined Life*. The school also plans to create and refine "authentic" assessments aligned with interdisciplinary curriculum standards they have already developed.

SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT "THE SCHOLAR CULTURE"

Triumphant Charter School (TCS) is organized around a powerful ***Scholar Culture***, a comprehensive program of social, personal and character development that transforms students' approaches to school and life while boosting their expectations of success. For TCS' student population, embracing the *Scholar Culture* is a prerequisite for success in other areas. TCS focused its Standards & Assessment Project on developing a meaningful way to measure the impact of its *Scholar Culture* by assessing improvement in the behavior, attitudes, and decision-making ability of both new and returning students.

Profile: Triumphant Charter School

Background & Mission:
Triumphant Charter School provides a nurturing and stimulating learning environment for middle school students who have not been successful in traditional public schools. Triumphant develops its predominantly over-aged, underachieving students into "TCS Scholars" who are focused on academic achievement, responsible living, and success in life. The school's founder and head is a veteran Chicago educator who also leads Olive-Harvey Middle College, an alternative high school for students at risk of dropping out.

Year Opened:
1997

Student Enrollment & Grades Served (1999-2000):
165 students in grades 6-8

Demographics:
92% African-American; 8% Latino; 88% low-income; 16% percent with special educational needs

School Head:
Helen Stanton Hawkins

Unique Learning Measure for TCS' *Scholar Culture*

Standard: Impact of TCS' Scholar Culture
Students will attend school prepared to learn with school supplies, a confident attitude, and correct interpersonal behavior.

Assessment Indicators and Tools

Student progress toward this standard will be demonstrated and gauged by the following indicators and assessment tools. Each student's scores in all of these indicators will be combined into a total score.

Indicator	Assessment Tools
Attendance	Attendance Records
Adherence to Dress Code (Uniform)	Daily Observation by Assistant Head of School
Preparation to Learn	Report Cards
Correct Interpersonal Behavior	Scholar Self-Evaluations, Parent Surveys, & Report Cards
Observance of School Rules	Focus Station Referrals, Incident Reports, Report Cards, & Winners' Circle

Performance Goal

Triumphant Charter School aims to have 75% of its students master the *Scholar Culture* standard in the first year of implementing this standard. The target will be raised to 90% in future years.

Aggregate Performance Ranges for CPS Rating

For TCS' Accountability Agreement, the school's rating on its Unique Learning Measure will be determined by the following percentages of TCS students mastering the *Scholar Culture* standard, varying depending on the length of time each student has been enrolled at Triumphant Charter School:

	1st-Year Scholar	2nd-Year Scholar	3rd-Year Scholar
High	80% or higher	85% or higher	90% or higher
Middle	61% - 79%	66% - 84%	71% - 89%
Low	60% or lower	65% or lower	70% or lower

Future Work

The entire teaching staff of Triumphant Charter School participated in developing its Unique Learning Measures. Triumphant Charter School plans to develop further standards and assessments to measure student attainment of the Scholar Culture. The school has also begun developing interdisciplinary curriculum standards and measures to be added to its Accountability Agreement after refinement.

MEASURING UP

TOOLS FROM CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOL
STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT PROJECT

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A key challenge for Chicago's demonstration schools was to translate **qualitative** aspects of school and student learning – for example, the ability to think critically or to speak and write well – into valid **quantitative** measures easily summarized and understood by the public, including the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. The next page shows one possible framework for carrying out such a translation and creating a Unique Learning Measure suitable for public reporting purposes.

This framework is based on one outlined by Perspectives Charter School and integrates ideas from other schools and Project consultant Sharon Damore. It is not the only way to carry out a project similar to Chicago's Standards & Assessment Project; it is just one possible framework, particularly oriented to the Accountability Agreement governing Chicago's charter schools. However, many aspects of the framework are generally useful, and other schools may find it helpful to follow some variation of this framework modified for their own needs. Following the framework are more extensive guiding questions for key steps within the framework.

FROM QUALITATIVE TO QUANTITATIVE: A FRAMEWORK FOR CREATING UNIQUE LEARNING MEASURES

1] Define Clear Standards

Define: What are our ultimate goals for our students and graduates? What do we expect them to know and be able to do before promotion to the next grade level or graduation?

Have the standards externally reviewed by experts and community members (e.g., standards and subject-area experts, curriculum specialists, university professors, other educators, school district administrators, school governing board members, businesspeople, parents).

2] Design Assessments Aligned with Those Standards

Define: How can students demonstrate that they have reached our standards?

3] Develop Scoring Tools or Rubrics

- For every assessment designed to measure attainment of a particular standard, first define: What are the essential features of a student performance or sample of work that meets the standard? That exceeds the standard? That does not meet the standard?

- Create a scoring tool or guide that rates student performance or work by applying these criteria.

- Assign point values to express students' overall attainment or non-attainment of the standard (for example: 3 = exceeds standard, 2 = meets standard, 1 = does not meet standard).

- Train teachers and other assessors to use the scoring guides or rubrics consistently.

4] **Test the Reliability of Assessments**

Pilot assessments and scoring tools repeatedly to ensure ***scoring consistency and accuracy*** across different evaluators and assessment occasions. Try an audit-like process in piloting and refining an assessment – for example, double- or triple-score every fifth sample of student work, compare scoring responses, and revise or clarify the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. Use ***exemplars*** – samples of student work that should be scored at varying levels – to help achieve consistent interpretation and usage of scoring guides.

5] **Translate Student Scores into Aggregate Measures (required for Chicago)**

After ensuring the validity and reliability of an assessment, translate student scores on the assessment into aggregate measures: What percent of all students met, exceeded, or did not meet the standard?

6] **Communicate Results**

Communicate student progress toward the standards by reporting individual and aggregate growth, using students' beginning or baseline performance as the point of comparison. Communicate school results through multiple avenues, such as community meetings and annual or more frequent reports for parents, the public, and the media.

HELPFUL GUIDING QUESTIONS

Below are some guiding questions that Chicago's demonstration schools found helpful through various stages of developing their mission-based standards and assessments.

Learning Standards

- What is important for students and graduates of our school to learn, know, understand, and be able to do? What are our ultimate goals and expectations for our students? What should our graduates permanently possess as a result of their time in our school?
- When do we expect students to have the knowledge, understandings, and skills we have defined? In other words, what must students know and be able to do before promotion to each grade level or graduation from our school?
- Do our standards embody the expectations necessary to achieve our mission and reach our goals?
- Are they challenging and achievable?
- Are they ***measurable***?

Assessments

- How will we ensure and demonstrate that we meet or exceed these expectations? How will we measure and report – clearly and concisely – whether our students are reaching each learning standard?
- What are all the characteristics of a student performance or sample of work that meet a particular standard? Exceed the standard? Do not meet the standard?
- Does this assessment enable all students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings relevant to the given standard?
- Is the assessment ***valid*** – does it measure the skills or knowledge we intend it to measure?

* These guiding questions are adapted from reports produced by the demonstration schools, as well as an "Evaluation Tool for School-Developed Assessments" developed by Sharon Damore, Ed.D., with assistance from John Easton. The Evaluation Tool is reproduced in Appendix B.

- Is the assessment ***reliable*** – does it provide consistent results when taken repeatedly by the same student at a given point in his/her development? Does it provide consistent results when taken by other students at the same point in development?

- Is there a clearly written scoring tool or rubric that is consistent with the purpose of the assessment?

- Do our assessment tools, scoring guides, or rubrics pass the test of ***interrater reliability***, or scoring consistency and accuracy? That is, do different assessors or evaluators use them in the same way, resulting in consistent responses when scoring the same student performance or work sample?

  Tip: Schools can achieve interrater reliability by undertaking an audit-like process to pilot and refine assessment tools – for example, double- or triple-scoring every fifth sample of student work, comparing the scoring responses given by the different evaluators, and revising or clarifying the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. For examples, see "Establishing Consistency and Reliability in Assessment Scoring Tools," pp. 45-46.

- Are our assessment tools or scoring guides user-friendly? Are the instructions and procedural explanations for teachers or other assessors clear?

- Is the assessment feasible to administer?

Double-Checking the Quality and Integrity of Learning Measures

- Are our assessments aligned with our standards and curriculum?
- Are the standards and curriculum aligned?
- Are the knowledge and skills we test important to teach and test?
- Does our school adequately teach the knowledge and skills being tested?
- Do our assessments accurately measure attainment of the standards?
- Do our standards and assessments show both breadth and depth?
- Do our standards and assessments demand that students demonstrate more than simple recall?
- Do our standards and assessments represent a worthwhile educational experience?
- Are the standards and assessments free of gender, cultural, and other biases?

MEASURING UP

PARTICIPANTS' REFLECTIONS
AND LESSONS LEARNED

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There is no "one best way" to carry out an intensive project to develop mission-based learning measures. Each of Chicago's demonstration schools organized its Standards & Assessment Project in its own way, following different processes to carry out the work they had outlined for themselves. While they shared the overall goals and direction of the Standards & Assessment Project, the actual measures they planned to develop were quite different, as was the scope of work from school to school. As a result, the schools took different paths to arrive at their goals.

The following pages present reflections and words of advice from the demonstration school leaders, staff, consultants, and the Standards & Assessment Project manager, who assisted all the schools in crafting Unique Learning Measures acceptable for their Accountability Agreements. The Project participants hope these thoughts will smooth the way for other schools trying to create mission-based learning measures that will carry weight with external audiences.

SEEK THE WISDOM AND CREATIVITY OF ALL TEACHERS AND DIVERSE EXTERNAL RESOURCES.

One feature common to all of Chicago's demonstration charters is ownership of the Standards & Assessment Project by their teachers. Teachers were the primary movers, shapers, and leaders of the Standards & Assessment Project at each school. Teacher ownership of the development of mission based learning measures is vital because ***"standards and assessments have to be analyzed, pulled apart, and revisited constantly by those who will implement them in the classroom,"*** explains Lisa Kenner, a teacher at Triumphant Charter School. For the same reason, she advises schools to "resist the urge simply to copy standards and assessments available off-the-shelf from various sources."

Published resources related to standards and assessments in diverse learning areas (many of which are cited in Appendix F) can certainly be a helpful starting point for schools trying to create their own achievement measures. While an abundance of learning standards and assessment tools and systems is available on the market and in the public domain, schools commonly find it necessary to modify and customize standards and assessments developed elsewhere to meet their own needs.

PARTICIPANTS' REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Kendra Sisserson, a consultant to North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School, agrees that schools undertaking this type of project must ***"constantly think about the impact that the standards and assessments will have on instruction."*** This type of reflection requires the continual participation and input of teachers. Chicago's demonstration schools called upon consultants as important resources to inform and support their efforts, and consultants often served as expert facilitators to stimulate teachers' thinking and critical reflections. However, no consultant "drove" the project at any school. Teachers' dedication to and shared ownership of this endeavor were necessary to complete the Project successfully – and they will be equally necessary to implement the new standards and assessments effectively in each school.

FOR THIS TYPE OF PROJECT TO SUCCEED, ALL STAFF MUST FIRMLY BELIEVE IT WILL REINFORCE AND ADVANCE THE SCHOOL'S MISSION.

Creating mission based standards and assessments that are meaningful and credible to diverse external parties demands time and commitment from teachers working together. For some of Chicago's demonstration schools, this endeavor placed tremendous demands on teachers' already hectic schedules, requiring collective laboring over standards and assessments on countless late nights and weekends throughout the school year, as well as intensive periods during the summer.

As a result, other schools contemplating similar work should be well aware of the considerable additional demands it can place on teachers' time. To sustain and successfully complete such a project, school staff must collectively decide, with their eyes wide open, that the benefits (the development of clear measures to demonstrate the school's performance in fulfilling its rich, ambitious mission) will outweigh the costs (the demands on already overworked staff, if undertaking this work during the school year).

"Don't engage in a venture like this if it's going to divert you from your primary mission," advises Marv Hoffman, director of North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School. Neither pressure from external parties nor the offer of financial subsidies can justify placing such demands on faculty time and energy unless teachers agree that it will truly strengthen instruction and learning in the school. In the end, schools contemplating such a project must decide that it will be worth all the effort – by improving teaching and learning, and by enabling the school to demonstrate, report, and be recognized for its performance across a range of fundamental school goals.

DON'T BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW

One simple lesson learned by all the demonstration schools is that creating standards and assessments that are meaningful, rigorous, externally credible, and manageable for staff is more complex and time-consuming than it seems. "We all vastly underestimated the time and effort required to develop these measures," notes Project manager Sharon Damore.

Based on their experiences, the leaders and staff of the demonstration charters would advise others to start by developing standards and assessments for just one or two learning areas or goals, rather than try to tackle several simultaneously.

All four demonstration schools started the Standards & Assessment Project in the summer of 1998 with overly broad ambitions, and subsequently had to narrow the scope of their projects in order to achieve the quality, detail, and rigor they sought for their Unique Learning Measures. Eventually each school focused on developing or refining just ***one to three*** unique standards and assessments for foundational aspects of each school's educational mission – a fraction of their original intent. For all the schools, focusing on depth rather than breadth was the only way to achieve quality results in the time given.

"This type of project is manageable if it's focused and relatively narrow. ***Don't be afraid to choose a focus that seems too narrow – it probably isn't,"*** advises Kathleen Sheehan, a teacher at North Lawndale College Prep. In addition to the time and intellectual energy required to develop mission-based standards and assessments, schools should be prepared for various implementation challenges when piloting those standards and assessments. Now that the demonstration schools are piloting their new assessments, they are discovering aspects that need to be revised, refined, or adjusted. Quality implementation of new standards and assessments requires focused time and attention that would not be possible if a school tried to tackle too many at once.

Happily, however, the demonstration school staffs are confident that the experience they have gained through the Standards & Assessment Project will significantly ease future efforts to develop or refine their Unique Learning Measures. "We still have four other major areas of our mission that we'd like to create standards and assessments for," reports Lisa Kenner from Triumphant Charter School. "But after all we've learned by going through this once, developing those measures will be a lot easier. It'll be like eating a steak, not an elephant."

USE CONSULTANTS WISELY – THEY CAN HELP KEEP THE BALL IN THE AIR, AND MORE

Consultants played important, if varying, supporting roles in the Standards & Assessment Project led by each of Chicago's demonstration charters. Each school worked selectively with one or more consultants chosen by school leaders and staff, who relied on them for activities and functions such as the following:

- ***Finding, analyzing, digesting, synthesizing and presenting other resources to school staff engaged in the project.*** For example, to save time for harried teachers working on NLCP's project, the school's project consultant read and *produced abstracts* of particular publications that he or the teachers thought could help them toward their project goals. This consultant also found a well-established communications program – the Speaking, Arguing, and Writing (SAW) Program at Mt. Holyoke College – that he recommended school staff visit and observe. This program ultimately provided many ideas and resources that the staff used in creating their Oral Expression standard and assessment.

- ***Asking thoughtful, provocative questions to stimulate teachers' critical reflections, helping to focus their efforts and contributions to the project.***

- ***Facilitating or managing the project overall.*** At a few of Chicago's demonstration schools, the role of consultants as project managers or facilitators included, for example, documenting project progress for internal guidance, ensuring staff members' adherence to project goals and timelines, and providing reports to external parties as needed.

- ***Leading professional development sessions on selected topics, such as achieving interrater reliability in the use of assessment scoring tools.***

As noted earlier, consultants did not drive the project at any of Chicago's demonstration schools, but they were often important members of the team who helped keep the ball in the air when school staff were being pulled in many directions. In some cases, consultants made the project considerably more manageable for teachers.

As shown by Chicago's demonstration charters, wise use of carefully chosen consultants can considerably enhance a busy school faculty's capacity to develop or refine mission-based standards and assessments. Particularly during the most hectic times in the school year, consultant support can help staff

focus their limited time and energies most efficiently on necessary project tasks. Consultants can also provide a valuable fresh eye to review and critique standards and assessments drafted by faculty. In short, they can serve as facilitators, project managers, mentors, guides, external reviewers, and cattle prods.

CARVE OUT TIME FOR THIS WORK. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUMMERS AND A PLANNING YEAR, IF POSSIBLE, AND FIND CREATIVE WAYS TO MAKE TIME DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Though participating charter school faculty have ultimately found the development of Unique Learning Measures to be worthwhile, they also agree that it was a demanding and time-consuming undertaking. The extent of the burden on school staff varied among schools, depending on the scope of the standards and assessments they planned to develop, as well as the availability of external resources to help school faculty.

The Project participants interviewed for this booklet generally agree that there is no convenient time during a charter school's demanding start-up years to undertake a project of this intensity, even if its scope is relatively narrow. Given that, however, they also think that the best time to focus attention on this type of work is probably during the summer, when teachers usually have more time to concentrate together on program development and refinement. (Although three of Chicago's demonstration charters operate summer programs, their schedules and staffing are organized differently from the rest of the year, thus giving the regular school faculty more time to collaborate on curriculum development and accountability planning.)

Could a school make valuable headway in developing Unique Learning Measures during a ***planning year*** before the school actually opens, assuming key staff are in place to carry out such work then? Some demonstration school leaders and teachers believe it could be helpful to begin researching and drafting mission-based standards and assessments during a planning year, or even during the school's start-up summer. Setting meaningful performance targets, though, would have to wait until the teachers know their actual students and their baseline achievement levels. Thus, even if a school's faculty is in a position to develop mission-based standards and assessments before the school opens, they will almost certainly need to revisit and refine those measures after getting to know their students.

Even without real students of their own, schools that choose to draft standards and assessments during a planning year are not consigned to an abstract exercise. There are numerous ways that they can test their standards and assessments for real-classroom applicability, validity, reliability, and possible implementation difficulties. For example, they can:

- Invite educators in operating schools (with student populations similar to that expected by the charter school, if possible) to critique their draft standards and assessments.

- Invite educators in operating schools to participate in several trials of the assessment tools, using samples of real student work gathered from their schools and comparing scores across evaluations to establish reliability.

- *Pilot* the assessments in an operating school to test their meaningfulness, feasibility, and real value to instructors.

As for undertaking intensive work on standards and assessments during a charter school's start-up summer: "If a school already has drafted its standards and assessments and just wants to *refine* some of them, they could probably do that in the summer before the school opens," says Chris Kelly, who helped to lead NKO Charter School's assessment project. "If the school is planning to do more than that, though, it would probably be better to wait until the next summer. It would be very hard, if not impossible, for newly hired staff to develop quality standards and assessments from scratch in the midst of start-up."

In addition to working on this type of project during the summer, schools might also think creatively of ways to make time during the school year. For example, a school could set aside one day or a half-day every week, two weeks, or month for staff to collaborate on strengthening standards, instruction and assessment, or to engage in related professional development. On this regular planning day, community resources or volunteers could teach special classes, lead the students on field trips, or supervise internships. Perspectives Charter School's calendar incorporates such a plan: one day each month, all Perspectives students (both middle and high schoolers) spend the entire day at an internship with a local business or community agency, while teachers dedicate the non-teaching

day to collective professional development and instructional planning and improvement. Organized by the school to expose students to real-world work and careers, the internships are an integral part of Perspectives' program and built into the calendar to give teachers much-needed time to refine instruction.

MAP OUT A WORK PLAN AND APPOINT A PROJECT MANAGER OR TASKMASTER.

In a collaborative project as intense as developing school standards and assessments – requiring continual input from many staff members and regular communications with external parties – schools will need a project manager or taskmaster to focus and coordinate all work within the group, document the project's progress for internal guidance and external reporting, and ensure adherence to timelines. The project manager could be the school director, a teacher, another staff member, or a consultant to the school – but Chicago's demonstration schools agree that it is an essential role that must be filled. When competing responsibilities pull school staffs in different directions, someone will be needed to keep the project on course and everyone moving forward together.

It is most important for the project manager to understand the types of standards and assessments the school is striving to develop, and the competing demands and challenges faced by staff. In the experience of Chicago's schools, it is helpful but not absolutely necessary for the project manager to be an expert in standards and assessment. A project manager with expertise in standards and assessment – who may or may not be on the school staff – could be expected to contribute substantively to the project. One without such expertise, but possessing a strong understanding of the school's endeavor and project management skills, can be indispensable by continually galvanizing and focusing the efforts of school staff.

The San Carlos Learning Center, California's first charter school, uses a similar approach to provide common planning time for teachers. This school operates on a "5/4" weekly schedule, whereby students are in school five days a week, but teachers teach only four days a week. On the fifth day, community volunteers and resources conduct special classes and activities or lead field trips while the teachers work together on educational planning, program refinement, and professional development.

"KEEP IT REAL"

Teachers commented that the Standards & Assessment Project gave them a rare and rewarding opportunity to reflect critically on their teaching practices and engage in intellectual debate in their subject areas with their colleagues. Without discipline, though, these important discussions might allow participants to lose sight of their ultimate goal. An important piece of advice to keep this type of endeavor focused on practical goals and moving forward productively is simply to ***"Keep it real"*** – that is, grounded in the experiences of real students and teachers.

For example, early in their Standards & Assessment Project, Triumphant Charter School faculty decided to examine the reasons for the remarkable turnaround of one particular eighth-grader, Ricky. Within one school year, Ricky had transformed from an unmotivated, belligerent troublemaker into a conscientious, well-behaved student: a *Scholar* eager to learn and contribute to the school community. Triumphant's teachers chose Ricky as their "model" precisely because he was not an exception in the school – rather, he was a shining example of the type of dramatic improvement they, as teachers, witness and strive to shape every day. As a result, one of the questions they used to inform and guide their Project was: ***"What decisions did we make and actions did we take each day to bring about this complete change in Ricky?"*** This type of inquiry, grounded in reality and their everyday experiences at the school, was a valuable beacon for the faculty and helped to keep their project on track.

DEVELOP A HABIT OF REVIEWING STUDENT WORK TOGETHER AS A STAFF

Establishing the reliability of assessments and scoring tools is imperative for schools proposing performance-based assessments. Refinement and revision will go more smoothly for school faculties that are accustomed to reviewing student work together, comparing and discussing differences in their evaluations, and involving external reviewers in their endeavors. Use of ***exemplars*** – samples of student work that should be scored at varying levels – can be enormously helpful to achieve consistent interpretation and usage of scoring guides.

"Establishing test validity and reliability doesn't necessarily require statistical correlations," notes Project manager Sharon Damore. "It requires getting good advice and assistance from assessment experts who understand the value of non-standardized performance measures; involving teachers in developing,

examining and refining 'authentic' measures; subjecting standards and measures to rigid external review; and revising the measures as needed. ***Reliability and validity can be established by developing common understandings within schools and among teachers on learning expectations."*** Local universities as well as school districts' departments of research and accountability frequently have assessment specialists willing to lend their expertise to help enhance the rigor and external credibility of school-developed learning measures.

Following are examples highlighting the strategies used by two schools in Chicago to craft reliable assessments through continual scoring comparisons among colleagues.

ESTABLISHING CONSISTENCY AND RELIABILITY IN ASSESSMENT SCORING TOOLS

Two Examples

North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School

The assessment team that developed NKO's Writing Appraisal System was comprised of writing assessment specialists, NKO faculty, and Literacy Coordinators (teachers) from eight other public schools in Chicago in the Center for School Improvement's (CSI) network. Together, this team examined accountability protocols developed earlier by CSI as well as from across the country, paying particular attention to urban school district and charter school writing assessment materials.

Drawing upon these models, the assessment team created scoring guides to gauge student progress toward NKO Charter School's Unique Writing Standards as well as state and district standards. The team then repeatedly scored samples of student writing collected from the eight schools in CSI's network, compared their scores to find variances, and revised the rubrics as needed to eliminate significant discrepancies. To build consistent understanding and usage of the rubrics, the team used ***exemplars*** – samples of student work illustrating distinct levels of achievement that should be scored accordingly. They repeated this exercise several times throughout the Project year until they had confidence in the reliability of the assessment instruments.

North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School

NLCP will establish consistency and reliability in the use of its Oral Expression assessment tool both internally and externally. First, in training faculty and student judges in the use of the rubric, the school will use videotaped Oral Presentations by students from other schools. Teams of assessors of three people each (two faculty members and one student) will watch a taped presentation, score it and then compare and discuss individual scoring. This will be repeated with two additional taped presentations.

Having each Oral Performance assessed by three people provides an ongoing check on consistency, reliability, and fairness. Significant scoring variances within any three-member scoring team will be discussed and resolved by the team. If necessary, the scoring team can request assistance from one of the English faculty to resolve a scoring difference.

The school will also use a team of external, expert assessors to evaluate randomly selected, taped Oral Presentations. This team will consist largely of speech and communications faculty of local colleges and universities and possibly the Speaking, Arguing and Writing Program at Mt. Holyoke College. Scores produced by the external assessors will be compared with those of NLCP's internal team, and scoring variances will be resolved by refining or clarifying the assessment tool.

PILOT NEW ASSESSMENTS AND REVISE THEM AS NEEDED. DON'T WAIT FOR "PERFECTION."

Chicago's demonstration schools emphasize that creating Unique Learning Measures that are meaningful both inside and outside the school will require continual revisiting and refinement. Schools must pilot their assessments for many reasons: to ensure that they truly measure what a particular standard aims for; to establish their reliability across evaluators; and to ensure that they will be manageable and genuinely useful in guiding instruction. ***"You have to see how they will work in the classroom,"*** many teachers say. But schools shouldn't wait for perceived "perfection" before piloting their assessments in the classroom. Meaningful refinement and improvement require multiple trials with real students and teachers, and neither perfection nor near-perfection can occur without them.

The demonstration school leaders, staff and consultants generally agree that ***three years*** is a realistic timeline for developing, piloting, and refining a small set of Unique Learning Measures. These educators believe strongly in the standards they have created and will not compromise on them. However, they realize that they must fine-tune their assessments to make them workable, manageable, and maximally useful in the real life of their schools.

BE PREPARED TO MANAGE AN INCREASED FLOW OF INFORMATION.

One challenge shared by some of the Project demonstration schools as they pilot their new assessments this year is the need to manage substantially more student performance data generated by the assessments. Rich, performance-based assessments will increase both the quality and ***quantity*** of student information available to teachers. Accordingly, school staff should carefully consider issues such as: (1) the scope of the assessments that will comfortably fit in the school's calendar, (2) how much student information teachers can digest and use to guide instructional decisions; and (3) how staff will manage the inevitable increase of performance data for internal and external purposes.

"We're finding it hard to structure ***time*** for assessments as ambitious as ours both inside and outside the classroom," report Perspectives Charter School's leaders and staff. "The project based assessments we created are just too big – they're great on paper, but now that we're piloting them in the school, we see that it's eating up a disproportionate amount of time to prepare kids for them and manage the assessment results. We could use a full-time – or at l east a part-time assessment coordinator just to help teachers keep track of the continual flow of information coming from these assessments and all the deadlines built into our assessment calendar."

As a result of this implementation challenge, Perspectives' teachers are considering ways to streamline their assessments and restructure the assessment calendar. One option, for example, is to compress the project evaluation schedule into a single *A Disciplined Life* Assessment Week at the end of the school year.

It will take time for every school implementing new, ambitious alternative assessments for the first time to find the right balance – integrating the assessments comfortably to maximize school productivity instead of consuming disproportionate attention or school time. Chicago's demonstration schools resolutely agree, however, that ***the balance is well worth seeking***. Despite the implementation challenges some are facing this year, teachers strongly believe in the value of the assessments they have created and are committed to finding how to weave them comfortably into their schools' instructional programs. Their experience simply shows that schools may need a pilot year or semester to learn how to do that, or to refine the assessments to make them manageable and most valuable for the school.

Schools implementing substantial performance assessments may want to explore computerized or Web based information management tools to track, manage and make the best use of student performance data. Many information management tools and systems are now available to schools, and school leaders and staff may need to explore various options before finding one that they feel comfortable using. Such a search, however, may be a wise investment for schools planning to implement rich, multidimensional assessments. Having the right data management tool in hand can make an enormous difference – enabling school staff to use the assessments to help guide instructional decisions, as intended, instead of being overwhelmed by the new information produced.

The experiences of Chicago's demonstration schools highlight the cost not just of developing but also *implementing* high quality performance assessments. Whether schools choose to use information management technologies or dedicate personnel to the task of assessment coordination and management, they will need to plan and budget for the cost of implementing new assessments effectively.

CAVEAT: MUCH WORK BY TEACHERS MAY GO UNCOMPENSATED

Chicago's demonstration schools emphasize that the private grants provided by the Standards & Assessment Project ($13,500 per school for the first half year of the Project, $8,000 per school for the final phase) were necessary – and greatly appreciated – but not sufficient to support the Project fully at any school. Three schools spent the bulk of their grants on compensating teachers for their time on the Project, and allocated a smaller amount for consulting help as needed. Still, these schools found that they could not compensate

teachers fully for their time on the Project. The fourth school chose to allocate the bulk of its grant for sustained consulting assistance. The teachers at this school feel that this was a reasonable and fair use of the grant funds, as the consultant considerably eased and smoothed the Project for them.

Even though some – and in some cases, much – teachers' work on this Project at Chicago's demonstration schools could not be compensated, the teachers universally agree that the Project was worthwhile. They share a deep belief in what Helen Hawkins, head of Triumphant Charter School, repeatedly reminded her staff: ***"This is a lot of hard work, but it will forever nourish your teaching."***

In working with all of the schools, Project manager Sharon Damore frequently reminded teachers of the value and importance of their work in developing learning measures that are more comprehensive and externally enlightening than standardized tests, as well as useful to their teaching. "The educators involved in this Project all believed in this exciting opportunity – unique in the public school arena – to be able ***to stop being victims of standardized tests*** that don't begin to capture what we want students to know and be able to do," says Dr. Damore. "Though they couldn't be compensated for all their work, teachers were impressively motivated to forge more meaningful paths to school accountability." The work undertaken by teachers in Chicago's demonstration schools was not for the faint of heart – but these educators testify to the professional satisfaction gained from making their most heartfelt educational endeavors count.

MEASURING UP

REFLECTIONS FOR CHARTER AUTHORIZERS
AND POLICY LEADERS

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Chicago's Charter School Standards & Assessment Project grew from a mutual compact –requiring not only a commitment from schools to develop externally meaningful, mission-based learning measures, but also a corresponding commitment from Chicago's chartering agency to recognize and value such measures. Moreover, as co-sponsor of a pilot initiative in uncharted territory, CPS' Charter Schools Office did not passively observe and judge the schools' work. Instead, in partnership with Leadership for Quality Education, the Charter Schools Office offered the schools significant support and technical assistance (which can be expected to decline in future years as more experience and models emerge to guide schools' efforts).

The Standards & Assessment Project sponsors hope that their experience will encourage and help to inform similar initiatives to deepen educational accountability in other school districts and charter jurisdictions. Below are a few closing thoughts from Greg Richmond, director of CPS' Charter Schools Office, and Sharon Damore, manager of the Standards & Assessment Project, specifically for charter authorizers and other readers interested in promoting the usage of mission-based, externally validated learning measures for public school accountability.

SCHOOL-CREATED, MISSION-BASED STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS ARE A VALUABLE COMPONENT OF MEANINGFUL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS.

From the perspective of a charter school authorizer interested in making sound, publicly defensible judgments on school performance, I would recommend the development and consideration of these types of measures in school accountability plans," says Mr. Richmond.

"We ask schools and school districts to develop clear standards for what students should know and be able to do, which most often results in enormous catalogs of standards that aren't carefully assessed and thus don't hold force in schools or with the public. But there are ways to get out of this fog.

"Defined, measurable and objective evaluation criteria agreed upon by both schools and their authorizer are desirable for both parties. ***School-developed, externally validated learning measures add depth to the accountability compact between schools and their authorizing agency.*** They can be a particularly powerful tool in jurisdictions where the charter authorizer is willing to give significant weight to performance indicators other than standardized test scores."

APPOINT A STAFF MEMBER OR CONSULTANT TO MANAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE MEASURES.

Creating, testing and applying school-based learning measures is a significant undertaking for a chartering agency as well as for individual schools. For other charter authorizers wishing to encourage the development of mission-based standards and assessments, Mr. Richmond recommends dedicating a particular person with accountability expertise – whether a staff member or a consultant – to manage the initiative. ***"As with any avenue of accountability, this requires ongoing oversight; it doesn't end when the measures are developed,"*** he says. "Just getting to that point requires someone to work closely with schools to guide their efforts and ensure consistent quality and follow-through. But after sound measures are created, someone has to work with the schools in piloting their assessments to achieve externally credible administration, refine measures if needed, and ensure that the schools have effective systems for managing, using, and reporting data."

GIVING SCHOOLS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP VALID, RELIABLE MEASURES OF ACHIEVEMENT IS A VALUABLE INVESTMENT.

Chicago's experience confirms that developing, refining and properly applying mission-based learning measures require an investment at the individual school level as well as consistent guidance and support from the oversight agency. "It was a lot more work than any of us – the schools, the project sponsors and the project manager – ever expected," Mr. Richmond notes. Most educators, even the most successful ones, have little experience or expertise in student assessment for purposes of public reporting and school evaluation (as opposed to purely diagnostic or internal purposes). As a result, creating standards and assessments that are externally credible can be labor-intensive, requiring customized consulting help for individual schools and ongoing guidance for all.

Ultimately, however, Mr. Richmond and Dr. Damore are confident that the investment of time and resources by schools and the Standards & Assessment Project sponsors was well-placed. "Rich, meaningful standards demand equally rich, multidimensional assessments," points out Dr. Damore. "It takes time and effort within each school along with outside expertise, but the result is unquestionably worthwhile. Also, as we gain more experience and models to learn from, developing these measures will become easier and more efficient. ***But we can't fairly hold schools and teachers accountable for student learning unless we align evaluation with the range of educational challenges they are taking on.*** Multiple-choice standardized tests don't begin to reach that breadth and depth." Mr. Richmond and Dr. Damore strongly agree that carefully constructed mission-based performance measures are an important and enlightening tool – not only for charter authorizers, school leaders and teachers, but for all members of the public concerned about school and student achievement.

MEAS
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UP

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

ASSESSMENT – A method, tool, or system to evaluate student progress toward – or mastery of – a particular learning standard.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT – A non-standardized method of evaluating student learning, often used to measure higher-order thinking skills and competencies. Instead of multiple-choice, "paper-and-pencil" tests, alternative assessments typically take the form of student performances, demonstrations, portfolios, projects, presentations, or exhibitions. Also known as ***authentic or performance-based assessments***.

CRITERION-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT – An assessment that measures students' mastery of specific content standards or knowledge (the test's content *criteria*).

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT – An assessment that measures student progress toward a particular standard.

INTERRATER RELIABILITY – Scoring consistency of an assessment tool, scoring guide or rubric, resulting in consistent scoring responses when used by different evaluators to assess the same student performance or work sample.

MULTIPLE SCORING (e.g., double- or triple-scoring) – Having two or more different evaluators score the same sample of student work (to test the reliability of the assessment).

NORM-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT – An assessment that shows how students at a particular grade level taking the same assessment perform in comparison to the average test taker (defined by the normal or bell curve) at that grade level. Usually referenced to state, national or international averages, depending on the specific test.

RELIABLE (assessment) – Provides consistent results when taken repeatedly by the same student at a given point in his/her development, as well as by other students at the same point in development.

RUBRIC – A scoring tool or guide that defines specific achievement standards to assess particular types of student performances or work. Rubrics provide a rating scale (such as "4 – 3 – 2 – 1" or "Distinguished – Proficient – Apprentice – Novice") and describe the features that characterize student work at each point of the scale.

STANDARD – A clear, measurable statement of what students will be expected to know (*a **content standard***) or be able to do (*a **performance*** or ***skill standard***) at a given point in their development.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT – A culminating assessment that measures student mastery of a particular standard, after all skills or knowledge relating to the standard have been taught.

VALID (assessment) – Assesses the skills or knowledge it is intended to assess.

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION TOOL FOR SCHOOL-DEVELOPED ASSESSMENTS

The following pages contain an evaluation tool designed for the Standards & Assessment Project to help schools strengthen the technical credibility – the validity and reliability – of their alternative assessments. The Project's Expert Review Committee used this tool in critiquing the assessments produced by Chicago's charter schools midway through the second phase of the Standards & Assessment Project. In addition, the tool was given to the schools to evaluate and refine their assessments internally.

This tool was developed by Standards & Assessment Project Manager Sharon Darnore, with assistance from John Easton, an assessment expert at the University of Chicago's Consortium on Chicago School Research and a member of the Expert Review Committee.

CHICAGO CHARTER SCHOOLS STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Evaluation Tool for School-Developed Assessments

As you review the school's standards & assessment products, please answer the following three questions:

⊐ Yes ⊐ No	**Question #1: Are the assessments aligned with the standards and curriculum?**

Sub questions to consider:

⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Are the standards and curriculum aligned?
⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Is the content important enough to teach and test?
⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Do the assessments measure the standards?
⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Is there both breadth and depth in the standards and assessments?
⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Do the standards and assessments demand that students demonstrate more than simple recall?
⊐ Yes ⊐ No	Do the standards and assessments represent a worthwhile educational experience? Do they adequately meet the principles of fairness – e.g., content taught in school, lack of gender & cultural biases?

Comments:

☐ Yes ☐ No **Question #2: Is there adequate evidence of planning and documentation of assessment scoring consistency and accuracy?**

Sub-questions to consider:

☐ Yes ☐ No Is there an established plan or process to ensure reliability?

☐ Yes ☐ No Documentation of such a process?

☐ Yes ☐ No Documentation to establish scoring consistency and interrater reliability?

☐ Yes ☐ No Is there a clearly written rubric that is consistent with the purpose of the assessment?

☐ Yes ☐ No Has the faculty discussed how to achieve consistent scores across different teachers/scorers?

☐ Yes ☐ No Is there an audit-like process for scoring – for example, every 5th student work product is double- or triple- scored?

Comments:

☐ Yes ☐ No **Question #3: Have all practical issues of assessment been addressed?**

Sub-questions to consider

☐ Yes ☐ No Are the assessment tools or scoring guides user-friendly?

☐ Yes ☐ No Are the directions clear?

☐ Yes ☐ No Are the administration procedures well-written?

☐ Yes ☐ No Is the assessment timed or untimed?

☐ Yes ☐ No Is the assessment oral or written?

☐ Yes ☐ No Is the assessment a take-home or in-school project?

☐ Yes ☐ No Does the assessment meet CPS' expectations, such as requirements for aggregate reporting (e.g., reporting the number of students who meet, exceed, or do not meet the standards; schedule for administering the assessment)?

Comments

Additional Comments

Evaluator's Signature

Evaluator's Name

Date

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE TOOLS FOR UNIQUE LEARNING MEASURES

I. NARRATIVE WRITING

The following pages contain a Grade 5 Narrative Writing Rubric for teachers and a "kid-friendly" version of the rubric (for peer evaluations) from North-Kenwood Oakland NKO Charter School. These scoring tools were developed and refined with the assistance of the University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement.

NKO NARRATIVE WRITING RUBRIC

FOCUS The writing establishes and maintains a central or unifying event, and suggests the significance of the event by describing reactions.

4 (Distinguished)

- Central event is clear and maintained
- Reactions are present
- Closing is effective
- Demonstrates understanding of audience and task

3 (Proficient)

- Establishes a central event but may deviate at times or may be prompt dependent
- Reactions are present
- Closing may be present
- May be off mode
- May end abruptly
- Demonstrates an awareness of audience and task

2 (Apprentice)

- Unifying event is vague, or paper may feature multiple events
- No reactions
- Major drift(s) in focus or may present unrelated ideas
- Some awareness of audience and/or task

1 (Novice)

- Unifying event is absent, unclear, too limited, or confusing
- Minimal awareness of audience and/or task
- Insufficient writing

ELABORATION The writing is elaborated, i.e., supports a generalization or conclusion about an event with details.

4 (Distinguished)

- Most of the details support an elaborated account
- Some episodes/reactions to the event are supported by specific detail
- Minimal depth (second-order ideas)
- Details are effective, but may be used unevenly

3 (Proficient)

- Some portion of the narrative does not support an elaborated account of an event, or reader must use strong effort to infer
- Most details are appropriate, but some may be irrelevant, missing, dull or repetitious

2 (Apprentice)

- Most of the narrative does not support an elaborated account, paper may read like a list of episodes that do not support a generalization or conclusion about an event
- Many details are inappropriate, missing, or repetitious
- Confusing of unclear

1 (Novice)

- No portion or very little of the narrative supports an elaborated account of an event
- Details are random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
- Insufficient writing

ORGANIZATION The writing is ordered as a sequence of events through time; uses transitions between sentences (cohesion) and paragraphs (coherence); begins and ends at suitable places in the story.

4 (Distinguished)

- Narrative structure is evident, without noticeable gaps in time
- Exhibits cohesion and coherence through appropriate devices
- If present, most transitions are appropriate

3 (Proficient)

- Narrative structure is attempted, but reader may have to work to infer it or there may be gaps
- May begin or end in inappropriate places in the sequence of events
- If present, transitions may be simplistic, redundant, or intrusive
- Some evidence of coherence

2 (Apprentice)

- Structure is attempted, but may be inconsistent or out of order, may not be narrative, or may read like a list of details rather than an organized piece
- Begins and/or ends in inappropriate places in the sequence of events
- If present, transitions may be inappropriate or disruptive
- Little or no evidence of coherence

1 (Novice)

- Very confusing, or no attempt at narrative structure
- Lacks beginning or ending
- Insufficient writing

VOICE The writing reflects personal investment and expression

4 (Distinguished)

- The writer's unique voice is clear throughout the writing
- The tone of the piece is appropriate for the mood of the narrated story

3 (Proficient)

- The writer speaks directly to the audience in an individualistic manner
- Tone is appropriate for the most part, but may waver

2 (Apprentice)

- The writer may not seem fully involved in the topic
- The writer's voice may appear, but shifts or disappears at times
- Tone may be largely inappropriate for the mood of the story

1 (Novice)

- Writing is flat, stiff, mechanical, or suggests that writer is disinterested in topic
- No sense of the writer behind the words
- Insufficient writing

WORD CHOICE The writing is composed of words that are interesting, used accurately, and appropriate

4 (Distinguished)

- Words are highly effective, specific, and demonstrate a vocabulary at or above grade level
- Word choice may enhance specificity

3 (Proficient)

- Writer uses specific and strong nouns, verbs, and where appropriate, modifiers
- Language is fresh and uses few, if any, cliches

2 (Apprentice)

- Language is functional but bland and general, or below grade level
- May use cliches or too much repetition of words or phrases

1 (Novice)

- Vocabulary is limited or significantly below age/ability level
- Language is vague, redundant, or inappropriate for subject, tone, and/or audience

CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE The writing analyzes, interprets, or evaluates the event, rather than merely reporting the event.

4 (Distinguished)

- All or nearly all of the writing demonstrates extensive analysis, interpretation, or evaluation of an event, rather than merely reporting occurrences

3 (Proficient)

- Writing demonstrates some analysis, interpretation, or evaluation of an event, but there is also evidence of merely reporting occurrences

2 (Apprentice)

- A small portion of the writing may demonstrate that the writer analyzed, interpreted, or evaluated an event, but most is merely reporting

1 (Novice)

- Little or no evidence that the writer analyzed, interpreted, or evaluated an event
- Insufficient writing

CONVENTIONS The conventions of standard written English are employed accurately. Single-sentence opening and closing paragraphs are acceptable.

4 (Distinguished)

- Few or no minor errors, and no major errors
- Understanding of basic grammar evident; not all correct uses of verb/noun agreement
- Different types of sentence structure attempted with some success
- Few invented spellings of uncommon words

3 (Proficient)

- Some minor and major errors
- Understanding of paragraphing is evident but there may be some mistakes
- Sentence structure mostly accurate but unsophisticated
- Some invented spellings

2 (Apprentice)

- Enough minor and major errors to cause some confusion for the reader
- Paragraphs may largely be inaccurate
- May be more incorrect and unsophisticated sentences than correct and varied ones

1 (Novice)

- Errors so numerous that they interfere with communication
- Little or no evidence of an understanding of correct paragraphs or sentences

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: FOCUS

This rubric helps me see if my writing shows that I understand my audience and what the prompt asks me to do, and if I establish and stay focused on one position, purpose, or argument throughout the paper.

Score Point 4:

- ☐ It is obvious from my writing that I understand my audience and the prompt.
- ☐ In either a general introduction or a specific preview, I establish one position, purpose, or argument and focus on it throughout my paper. My logic is strong.
- ☐ My closing is awesome!

Score Point 3:

- ☐ I understand my audience and the task, but this is not always clear in my response.
- ☐ I establish one position, purpose, or argument in either a general introduction or a specific preview, but my paper only develops the points I previewed.
- ☐ My paper is mostly logical, but sometimes my writing drifts.
- ☐ I use a closing, but it could be stronger.

Score Point 2:

- My writing does begin to address an audience and a task, but then stops.
- Either my position, purpose, or argument is not clear, or you have to read the prompt to understand it.
- I need to write more clearly and keep my purpose in mind. Perhaps I did not write enough to explain my point, my paper drifts in logic or it shifts to a different mode.
- I do not have a closing.

Score Point 1:

- I need to pay more attention to what I am supposed to write. Either my purpose is not clear or my audience is not clear, or I need to write more.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: ELABORATION

This rubric helps me see how well I elaborated my position, purpose, or argument. It helps me evaluate how well my details support my main point (a generalization or conclusion about an event), how specific, accurate, and credible my details are, and if I supported all of my points equally well.

Score Point 4:

- I make a generalization or conclusion, and then support it with clear and interesting details.
- Every detail I use supports the generalization or conclusion.
- I support my generalization or conclusion with several strategies, such as explaining, providing evidence, and giving examples.

Score Point 3:

- Some of the details do not support the generalization or conclusion, or I need to use more details. Perhaps the reader has to work really hard to understand my elaboration.
- Most of my details are specific and right, but some are dull or repeated, or perhaps too shallow.

Score Point 2:

- Most of the details do not support a generalization or conclusion, or I make generalizations or conclusions that are not supported with details.
- I need to use more interesting details, or perhaps I repeated details instead of using new ones or didn't include enough details.
- I should make my essay longer.

Score Point 1:

- I do not have a generalization or a conclusion at all, or I do have a generalization or conclusion but no details to support it.
- My details are random and do not match my generalization or conclusion, or I do not have any details.
- I did not write enough.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: ORGANIZATION

This helps me understand how well I organized my essay so that it is logical and it flows well from beginning to middle to end. It helps me evaluate, in particular, my transitions between paragraphs and between sentences.

Score Point 4:

- I was careful to organize my ideas logically and effectively, and it shows in my writing.
- I organized my essay clearly and effectively, and did not use a formula.
- My writing flows smoothly from sentence to sentence, and from paragraph to paragraph.

Score Point 3:

- Most of my writing is organized, but it may follow a formula, stray from the pattern, or perhaps my reader has to work to understand it.
- My writing flows smoothly for the most part, and the transitions do not intrude, but either the organization is formulaic or there are places where the transitions are not clear or are repetitive.

Score Point 2:

- I need to think about the order of my story. It may read more like a list of details than like paragraphs with ideas that go together, or it is confusing, or the reader has to work hard to follow the organization.
- I need to use appropriate transitions between sentences and paragraphs.
- There may not be enough paragraphs or sentences.

Score Point 1:

- I need to organize my ideas and have a beginning, middle, and end.
- I need to make sure that my sentences and paragraphs fit together and that I use enough good transitions and that they are not disruptive.
- I need to write more.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: VOICE

This rubric helps me see how well my audience can hear my voice in my writing.

Score Point 4:

- My voice comes through loud and clear throughout the writing.
- My tone is appropriate for my subject and for my audience.

Score Point 3:

- My voice is clear in most parts, but not throughout the whole thing.
- My tone is mostly right for my prompt and my audience, but may not be consistent the whole way through the response.

Score Point 2:

- My writing may sound like my natural voice through some of the writing, but not through most of it. I need to think of ways to make my writing sound particularly like me.
- I do not sound interested in my topic.
- My tone is not appropriate for my topic and/or my audience.

Score Point 1:

- I need to make my writing sound like I wrote it and like I am really interested in the story I am telling.
- I did not write enough.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: WORD CHOICE

This rubric helps me think about my words, and to see how interesting and appropriate they are for my audience and my topic.

Score Point 4:

- My words are awesome! They are interesting and exactly right for the topic and for my audience.
- I used really specific nouns, verbs, and modifiers to make my subject clear in my reader's mind.

Score Point 3:

- Most of my words are specific and interesting, and fit my subject and my audience. At times I could have chosen better words.
- I avoided using clichés (but I may have a few to eliminate), and most of the time my words helped my readers really get into my writing.

Score Point 2:

- I need to use more interesting and specific words, and fewer clichés.
- I repeated my words and phrases too much.
- I need to think of words that are more appropriate for my audience and for my subject.

Score Point 1:

- I need to learn more words and use them in my writing.
- I need to work on not repeating my words so much. I need to use a variety of words and make sure that they are just right for my subject and my audience.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

This rubric helps me look at how well my writing shows that I have analyzed, interpreted or evaluated my subject, rather than just repeating information.

Score Point 4:

- All or nearly all of my writing shows that I thought hard about my subject, and that instead of repeating information my writing shows how I analyzed, interpreted, or evaluated that information in supporting my point.

Score Point 3:

- In general, my writing shows that I really thought about the information I used to support my point, but I also just repeated information I got from another source and didn't analyze, interpret, or evaluate.

Score Point 2:

- Some of the writing may show that I thought about the information I used to support my point, but mostly I just repeated. I need to think harder about my information and really analyze, interpret, or evaluate it before I use it in my writing.

Score Point 1:

- My writing does not show that I thought about my information to make my point. I need to either change my topic or think more about the information I use to support it.
- I did not write enough.

EXPOSITORY/PERSUASIVE 5/6: CONVENTIONS

This rubric helps me think about my spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure.

Score Point 4:

- My writing is neat and easy to read, and there are very few, if any, errors in spelling and punctuation marks.
- My sentences are not all the same style. I used different kinds of sentences.

Score Point 3:

- I made some mistakes in spelling and/or punctuation marks, but it is still easy to understand what I mean.
- My sentences are okay, but I did not use different kinds of sentences.
- I may have made some mistakes in paragraphing. It is okay to have opening and closing paragraphs that are only one sentence long.

Score Point 2:

- I need to be more careful with spelling and punctuation marks. There are many errors and, at times, it may be difficult to understand what I mean.
- I need to be more careful to write sentences that are correct and varied.

Score Point 1:

- I need to pay more attention to spelling and punctuation marks. Because of these mistakes, it is difficult to understand what I mean.
- I need to write complete sentences that are not run-ons and that are punctuated correctly.
- I need to write correct paragraphs and complete sentences.

II. ORAL EXPRESSION

The following page contains a scoring guide developed by North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School to assess student skills in oral expression.

Name of Speaker

Grade Level Date

Title of Reading

Assessed By

Coherence

[3]

- Engages listener, is interesting
- Contains central idea that is clearly defined and maintained
- Contains relevant detail that is consistently applied
- Detail supports central idea
- Organizing structure is purposeful and moves logically toward a conclusion
- Utilizes diction appropriate to subject, purpose and audience

[2]

- Is somewhat engaging to listener
- Contains a central idea but has minor lapses of focus
- Contains detail that is general and may be redundant
- Organizing structure is noticeable, but not appropriate
- Sequence of events moves through time with some gaps
- Most word choices and expressions appropriate to context

[1]

- Does little to engage listener
- Central idea is not evident
- Lacks detail
- Obvious lack of organization
- Insufficient length of presentation
- Simplistic and often inappropriate word choices

Grammar

[3]

- Contains few minor grammatical errors
- Errors do not interfere with transmission of ideas

[2]

- Contains few minor and very few major grammatical errors
- Errors seldom interfere with transmission of ideas

[1]
- Major errors in grammar
- Errors interfere with transmission of ideas

Audibility

[3]
- Projects voice to periphery of audience
- Uses consistently clear enunciation

[2]
- Projects voice to center of audience
- Enunciates most words

[1]
- Speaks in inaudible volume
- Does not enunciate words

Fluency

[3]
- Verbalizes smoothly and expressively
- Maintains appropriate posture and eye contact throughout

[2]
- Verbalizes with few unintentional pauses or fillers
- Occasionally looks at audience

[1]
- Verbalizes haltingly, stutters or pauses
- Excessive/little or no eye contact with audience

Engagement

[3]
- Uses appropriate body language
- Demonstrates awareness of audience by adjusting to its reaction

[2]
- Inserts some expressive gestures
- Demonstrates some audience awareness

[1]
- Little or no use of gestures
- Avoids audience contact

III. SOCIAL, PERSONAL & CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: "A DISCIPLINED LIFE"

The following pages contain several scoring guides – *A Disciplined Life* Assessment, Oral Presentation, Position Paper, Timeline, Budget and Summary rubrics – developed and used by Perspectives Charter School to assess student attainment of the school's learning standards for *A Disciplined Life*.

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

8th Grade *A Disciplined Life* Assessment Rubric

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions:

Place a score of 1 through 6 for each element within a category, then total the score. Calculate the overall score by adding the totals. Then record the status of Exceeds Expectation, Meets Expectation, or Does Not Meet Expectations.

Assessment Category: 6] Content

Demonstrates conceptual understanding of the assessment
Complete and relevant representation of each culture
Thorough comparison of the two cultures
Accurate representation of each culture
Appropriate visual aids (pictures)
Correct interpretation and inferences to verify information (graphs)

TOTAL

Description of Score

- Demonstrates conceptual understanding
- Is complete and goes beyond what is expected
- Presents clear rationale
- Presents specific, relevant details as evidence
- Represents exemplary achievement

Assessment Category: 5] Research

Contains four complete interviews
Shows evidence of use of at least five resources
Appropriate and complete survey results

TOTAL

Description of Score

- Demonstrates understanding
- Is complete
- Presents rationale
- Presents supporting evidence
- Represents commendable achievement

Assessment Category: 4] Organization

Logical format of the information
Smooth and coherent transitions (headings and outline)
Quality appearance of the final report

TOTAL

Description of Score

- Demonstrates some understanding
- Is fairly complete
- Presents a flawed rationale
- Lacks supporting details
- Represents some evidence of achievement

Assessment Category: 3] Writing Conventions

Sentence structure and punctuation
Grammar (subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, etc.)
Spelling
Paragraphs

TOTAL

Description of Score

- Attempts to show understanding but is unclear
- Is incomplete
- Presents a flawed rationale
- Lacks supporting details
- Represents some evidence of achievement

Assessment Category: 2] Writing Style

Varied sentence structure
Clarity in writing
Vocabulary
Tone and audience

TOTAL

Description of Score

- Demonstrates obvious misconceptions
- Is sorely incomplete
- Presents no evidence of rationale
- Presents no examples
- Represents limited evidence of achievement

Assessment Category: 1] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals

Status

Description of Score

- Demonstrates no understanding
- Shows no real attempt
- Presents a restatement of the question
- Represents no evidence of achievement

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL
Oral Presentation Rubric–10th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions
Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Content

- ☐ Exceptional [4 points]
  An abundance of material clearly related to the topic; points are clearly made and all evidence supports thesis; includes interview results and reflective analysis.

- ☐ Proficient [3 points]
  Sufficient information that related to the topic; many references made to budget analysis and timeline as support.

- ☐ Limited [2 points]
  A great deal of information is not clearly connected to the thesis.

- ☐ Attempted [1 points]
  Thesis is not clear; information included that does not support thesis in any way.

- ☐ Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt.

Coherence and Organization

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Topic is clearly stated and developed, specific examples are appropriate, conclusion is clear, shows control, flows together well, effective transitions, well organized

- Proficient [3 points]
  Most information presented in logical sequence, generally very well organized, transitions from idea to idea present

- Limited [2 points]
  Concepts and ideas are loosely connected, lacks clear transitions, flow and organization are choppy

- Attempted [1 points]
  Presentation is choppy and disjointed, does not flow, development of topic is vague, no apparent logical order of presentation

- Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Originality

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Very original presentation of material, uses the unexpected to full advantage

- Proficient [3 points]
  Some originality apparent

- Limited [2 points]
  Material presented with little originality or interpretation

- Attempted [1 points]
  Repetitive

- Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Speaking Skills

- Exceptional (4 points)
  Poised, clear articulation; proper volume; steady rate; good posture and eye contact; displays enthusiasm and confidence; uses standard/ edited English and uses no index cards

- Proficient (3 points)
  Poised, clear articulation; proper volume; steady rate; good posture and eye contact; displays enthusiasm and confidence; uses standard/ edited English and uses one index card

- Limited (2 points)
  Some mumbling; little eye contact; uneven rate; little or no expression; inconsistent use of standard/edited English; heavy dependence on notecards

- Attempted (1 points)
  Inaudible or too loud; no eye contact; rate too slow/fast; speaker seemed uninterested and used monotone; completely read; no apparent use of standard/edited English

- Absent (0 points)
  Made no attempt

Length of Presentation

- Proficient (3 points)
  4 – 5 minutes

- Attempted (1 point)
  Too long or too short

- Absent (0 points)
  Made no attempt

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals

Status

- Exceeded Expectations (16 - 20 points)
- Met Expectations (13 - 15 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 12 points)

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

Position Paper Rubric–10th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Idea Development

☐ Exceptional [4 points]
Takes a strong, well-defined position; presents at least three appropriate arguments with at least three supporting details for each argument; turns question around.

☐ Proficient [3 points]
Clear position taken and defined; presents two arguments and at least two supporting details for each argument; turns question around.

☐ Limited [2 points]
Position not clearly stated; development of argument is brief, unrelated, unsupported general statements, arguments, and details; minimal examples used. Vague turning around of question.

☐ Attempted [1 point]
No clear position taken; undeveloped arguments; no examples used; does not turn question around.

☐ Absent [0 points]
No position taken; does not turn the question around.

Organization

Exceptional [4 points]
Writer demonstrated logical, subtle sequencing of ideas through welldeveloped paragraphs, transitions are used to enhance organization, a gripping introduction, or lead, and a strong conclusion evident

Proficient [3 points]
Paragraph development present; logical organization and sequencing, introduction, body, and conclusion present

Limited [2 points]
Logical organization of ideas, introduction, body, and conclusion present, but not fully developed

Attempted [1 point]
No evidence of paragraph structure; illogical organization of ideas

Absent [0 points]
Confusion prevails

Management of Time

Exceptional [4 points]
Essay submitted on time

Proficient [3 points]
Essay submitted on time

Attempted [1 point]
Submits incomplete essay

Absent [0 points]
Does not submit essay

Conventions

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Error-free paper; accurate spelling and punctuation, capitalization, and usage; varied sentence structure; rich vocabulary

- Proficient [3 points]
  Few errors present in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; some attempt at sentence variety; occasional use of rich vocabulary

- Limited [2 points]
  Incorrect sentence structure; spelling, punctuation, capitalization errors present; repetitious vocabulary; weak language

- Attempted [1 point]
  Multiple errors present in sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization; weak vocabulary and incorrect language usage

- Absent [0 points]
  Confusion prevails

Presentations

- Proficient [3 points]
  Neatly presented; legible; heading and title are present

- Limited [2 points]
  Presentation is legible but lacks heading and/or title

- Attempted [1 point]
  Difficult to read; not assembled with care; no heading or title

- Absent [0 points]
  Illegible; a mess

Mission Statement

_ Exceptional [4 points]
Clearly states four or more concrete and/or concise goals of project

_ Proficient [3 points]
Clearly states three concrete and/or concise goals of project

_ Limited [2 points]
Clearly states two concrete and/or concise goals of project

_ Attempted [1 point]
Clearly states one concrete and/or concise goal of project

_ Absent [0 points]
No goals are stated

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals

Status

_ Exceeded Expectations (16 – 20 points)
_ Met Expectations (13 – 15 points)
Did Not Meet Expectations (0 – 12 points)

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

Position Paper Rubric–12th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Idea Development

- ⌟ Exceptional [4 points]
  Takes a strong, well-defined position; presents at least three appropriate arguments with at least three supporting details for each argument; turns question around.

- ⌟ Proficient [3 points]
  Clear position taken and defined; presents two arguments and at least two supporting details for each argument; turns question around.

- ⌟ Limited [2 points]
  Position not clearly stated; development of argument is brief, unrelated, unsupported general statements, arguments, and details; minimal examples used. Vague turning around of question.

- ⌟ Attempted [1 point]
  No clear position taken; undeveloped arguments, no examples used; does not turn question around.

- ⌟ Absent [0 points]
  No position taken; does not turn the question around.

Organization

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Writer demonstrated logical, subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs, transitions are used to enhance organization, a gripping introduction, or lead, and a strong conclusion evident
- Proficient [3 points]
  Paragraph development present, logical organization and sequencing, introduction, body, and conclusion present
- Limited [2 points]
  Logical organization of ideas; introduction, body, and conclusion present, but not fully developed
- Attempted [1 point]
  No evidence of paragraph structure, illogical organization of ideas
- Absent [0 points]
  Confusion prevails

Management of Time

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Essay submitted on time
- Proficient [3 points]
  Essay submitted on time
- Attempted [1 point]
  Submits incomplete essay
- Absent [0 points]
  Does not submit essay

Conventions

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Error-free paper; accurate spelling and punctuation, capitalization, and usage; varied sentence structure; rich vocabulary

- Proficient [3 points]
  Few errors present in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; some attempt at sentence variety; occasional use of rich vocabulary

- Limited [2 points]
  Incorrect sentence structure; spelling, punctuation, capitalization errors present; repetitious vocabulary; weak language

- Attempted [1 point]
  Multiple errors present in sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization; weak vocabulary and incorrect language usage

- Absent [0 points]
  Confusion prevails

Presentations

- Proficient [3 points]
  Neatly presented; legible; heading and title are present

- Limited [2 points]
  Presentation is legible but lacks heading and/or title

- Attempted [1 point]
  Difficult to read; not assembled with care; no heading or title

- Absent [0 points]
  Illegible; a mess

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals

Status

- Exceeded Expectations (16 - 20 points)
- Met Expectations (13 - 15 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 12 points)

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

Timeline Rubric–10th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Identification of Need, Mission Statement, Personnel, Equipment, Advertising, Project Commencement

- Exceptional (4 points)
  Evidence of care taken in time guidelines for identifying need, writing mission statement, choosing site, personnel, equipment, advertising, and project commencement (revealing some pattern, or showing cause/effect relationship)

- Proficient (3 points)
  1-year timeline; includes 12 steps or stages and time blocks; projections are realistic

- Limited (2 points)
  Includes required number of steps or stages and time blocks, 1 year timeline, some unrealistic projections

- Attempted (1 point)
  Does not cover a 1 year period and/or does not include required number of steps or stages and time blocks

- Absent (0 points)
  Not attempted

Scale and Sequence

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Scale consistent and accurate; very appropriate for a 1-year timeframe; all items in sequence with care taken on placement within increments

- Proficient [3 points]
  Scale consistent, accurate and appropriate; need identification, mission statement, site personnel, equipment, advertising, and project commencement in sequence; increment marked; 1-year timeframe addressed

- Limited [2 points]
  Scale roughly drawn; a few items out of sequence; increments marked; timeframe abbreviated or extended

- Attempted [1 points]
  No apparent scale; numerous items out of sequence; time increments not marked; ambiguous

- Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Conventions

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Flawless

- Proficient [3 points]
  Few mechanical errors

- Limited [2 points]
  Some errors in spelling, identification, or dating

- Attempted [1 point]
  Many errors in spelling, identification, or dating

- Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Presentation

- ⌟ Exceptional [4 points]
  Visually striking; clearly an effective tool for communicating information

- ⌟ Proficient [3 points]
  Clear, uncluttered, and attractive

- ⌟ Limited [2 points]
  Legible

- ⌟ Attempted [1 point]
  Illegible or messy

- ⌟ Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals _____

Status _____

- Exceeded Expectations (16 - 20 points)
- Met Expectations (13 - 15 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 12 points)

_____

Evaluator's Signature

_____

Comments

_____

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_____

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

Timeline Rubric–12th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Life Moments, Happenings and/or Events

- ☐ Exceptional [4 points]
  Evidence of care taken in choosing life moments, happenings, and/or events (either most significant, or revealing some pattern, or showing cause/effect relationship)

- ☐ Proficient [3 points]
  6-year timeline; Includes 18 life moments, happenings, and/or events; projections are realistic

- ☐ Limited [2 points]
  Includes required number of life moments, happenings and/or events, 6-year timeframe; some unrealistic projections

- ☐ Attempted [1 point]
  Does not cover a 6-year period and/or does not include required number of life moments, happenings, and/or events

- ☐ Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Scale and Sequence

❑ Exceptional [4 points]
Scale consistent and accurate; very appropriate for a 6-year timeframe; all items in sequence with care taken on placement within increments

❑ Proficient [3 points]
Scale consistent, accurate and appropriate; life moments, happenings, and/or events in sequence; increments marked; 6-year timeframe addressed

❑ Limited [2 points]
Scale roughly drawn; a few items out of sequence; increments marked; timeframe abbreviated or extended

❑ Attempted [1 point]
No apparent scale; numerous items out of sequence; time increments not marked; ambiguous

❑ Absent [0 points]
Made no attempt

Conventions

❑ Exceptional [4 points]
Flawless

❑ Proficient [3 points]
Few mechanical errors

❑ Limited [2 points]
Some errors in spelling, identification, or dating

❑ Attempted [1 point]
Many errors in spelling, identification, or dating

❑ Absent [0 points]
Made no attempt

Presentations

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Visually striking, clearly an effective tool for communicating information
- Proficient [3 points]
  Clear, uncluttered, and attractive
- Limited [2 points]
  Legible
- Attempted [1 point]
  Illegible or messy
- Absent [0 points]
  Made no attempt

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals

Status

- Exceeded Expectations (16 - 20 points)
- Met Expectations (13 - 15 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 12 points)

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

Budget Rubric–12th Grade

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Evaluate each element (i.e., conventions) and check a points box. Then total up the scores at the end of this section. Once the total is calculated, enter the Status in the lines provided below, sign, date and provide any comments in the area provided.

Content

- ☐ Exceptional (4 points)
  Revenue and expense items are complete, understandable, and track well with student's timeline and video presentation

- ☐ Proficient (3 points)
  Revenue and expense items are complete and understandable, but do not track with student's timeline and video presentation

- ☐ Limited (2 points)
  Revenue and expense items are substantially in place, but some inconsistencies/discrepancies exist

- ☐ Attempted (1 point)
  Revenue and expense items are incomplete, missing, and disorganized

- ☐ Absent (0 points)
  Made no attempt

Presentation

- Exceptional [4 points]
  Budget is easily readable, neatly done, and is easily understandable by the reader. Minimal, if any, typing/spelling/ punctuation errors

- Proficient [3 points]
  Budget is readable and understandable, but some typing/spelling/ punctuation errors exist

- Limited [2 points]
  Budget format is hard to understand, and some typing/spelling/ punctuation errors exist

- Attempted [1 point]
  Budget format is hard to understand, and many typing/spelling/punctuation errors exist

- Absent [0 points]
  No attempt at compiling a budget is shown

Assessment Category: X] Calculation of Total Score

Sum of All Totals
Status

- Exceeded Expectations (16 - 20 points)
- Met Expectations (13 - 15 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 12 points)

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

PERSPECTIVES CHARTER SCHOOL

12th Grade Rubric Summary for Gateways Project

Project Title

Student Name

Evaluator Name

Directions

Enter the score the student received for each project, calculate the total, and then fill in the Status based upon the overall score.

- ⌟ Video Presentation [20 points]
- ⌟ Paper on Disciplined Life Principles [20 points]
- ⌟ Timeline Project [16 points]
- ⌟ Personal Budget Project [8 points]

Sum of All Totals

Status

- Exceeded Expectations (59 - 66 points)
- Met Expectations (48 - 58 points)
- Did Not Meet Expectations (0 - 47 points)

Evaluator's Signature

Comments

IV. SOCIAL, PERSONAL & CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: "THE SCHOLAR CULTURE"

The following pages contain a list of assessment tools and a chart from Triumphant Charter School (TCS) explaining how the school uses these evaluation components to assess student progress in learning and living the school's unifying *Scholar Culture*.

Assessment Table

Indicators	Tools	Frequency	Evaluation
Uniform	Observation of Morning Assembly	Daily	Head of School, Assistant Head Guidance Councelor
Preparation to Learn	Report Card	Twice per semester	All Teachers
Correct Interpretational Behaviors	Scholar/Parent Surveys; Report Card	Once per semester	Scholar, Parent, and Teacher
Follows School Rules	Incorrect Behavior Referral Sheet; Report Card	As needed	Dean of Student Life, All Teachers

TCS Scholar Culture Assessment
Third Year Scholar

Student Name _____ Year _____ Date _____

Standard
Students will attend school prepared to learn with school supplies, a confident attitude, and correct interpersonal behavior.

Indicators	Tools	Score Range	Scholar Score and Explanation
Uniform	Observation by Assistant Head of School	5] Uniform all days 4] No uniform 1 day 3] No uniform 2 days 2] No uniform 3 days 1] No uniform 4+ days	**Scholar Score** _____ Assistant Head of School monitors and records adherence to dress code.
Preparation to Learn	Report Card	5] Outstanding 4] Excellent 3] Satisfactory 2] Needs Improvement 1] Not Yet Demonstrated	**Scholar Score** _____ Teachers evaluate scholar's preparation on report cards, items #1-5.
Correct Interpersonal Behaviors	Report Card; Scholar Survey; Parent Survey	5] Outstanding 4] Excellent 3] Satisfactory 2] Needs Improvement 1] Not Yet Demonstrated	**Scholar Score** _____ Teachers evaluate scholar's behavior on report cards, items #6-10. Parent and scholar complete personal surveys.
Follows School Rules	Report Cards; IBRS (Incorrect Behavior Referral Sheet)	5] Outstanding 4] Excellent 3] Satisfactory 2] Needs Improvement 1] Not Yet Demonstrated	**Scholar Score** _____ Teachers evaluate scholar's adherence to school rules on report cards, items #11-15. Dean of Student Life records any IBRS's.

3 = Exceeds Standards (81% or higher)
2 = Meets Standards (80%)
1 = Needs Improvement (79% or lower)

Total _____

Percent _____

Recommendation _____

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TRIUMPHANT CHARTER SCHOOL ASSESSMENT EXPLANATION

Listed in Section One is a brief explanation of the methods used to assess students' attainment of the school's unifying *Scholar Culture*. For the first two indicators—Uniform and Preparation—there is simply one tool to evaluate student performance. However, for the last two indicators—Correct Interpersonal Behavior and Follows School Rules—there are multiple tools to factor in the assessment. The second section, Scoring, explains how the multiple tools are averaged together. Each of the tools weighs into the final score by the designated percentage.

1] Assessment Tools

Teacher Input

Average specified items from report card section,
"Positive Growth of Habits and Attitudes as a Scholar."
Example: Indicator on Correct Interpersonal Behavior Items 6 - 10 on Report Card.
Highest possible score is 5 points.

Parent Survey (20 questions)

Each "yes" indicated as an answer is 1 point
5 = 20 - 19 **4** = 18 - 17 **3** = 16 - 15 **2** = 14 **1** = below 14
Highest possible score is 5 points.

Scholar Survey

Average the 20 responses (scoring range from 1 -5)
Highest possible score is 5 points.

Incorrect Behavior Referral Sheet (IBRS)

1 or fewer referrals
4 = 2 referrals **3** = 3 referrals **2** = 4 referrals **1** = 4 or more referrals

2] Scoring

Indicator 3: Correct Interpersonal Behavior

- Calculate the scholar's earned score on each assessment tool

- Multiply the earned score by the following percentages:
  Teacher Input is 50%
  Scholar Survey is 25%
  Parent Survey is 25%

- Add these subtotals for the final score
  Report Cards + Scholar Survey + Parent Survey = Final Score

- Highest Possible Score is 5

Indicator 4: Follows the Rules

- Calculate the scholar's earned score on the two assessment tools

- Multiply the earned score by the following percentages
  Teacher Input is 50%
  IBRS referrals are 50%

- Add the subtotals for the final score
  Teacher Input + IBRS referrals = Final Score

- Highest Possible Score is 5

APPENDIX D

FEDERAL RESOURCES

One important possible resource for charter schools seeking support to develop, strengthen or refine their accountability plans – either before or after they have opened – is the U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Grant Program. This major grant program, which is administered chiefly by state departments or boards of education, provides ***planning and start-up/ implementation grants*** to schools in their first three years of operation. These grants may be used for a variety of purposes, including accountability planning. In addition, successful charter schools that have operated for at least three years may qualify for ***dissemination grants*** to continue refining their programs and share their best practices and innovations with other schools across the country. Use of dissemination grants for school accountability and evaluation purposes is highly encouraged.

Schools should contact their chartering agency or state department of education for information about applying for a federal planning, start-up/implementation, or dissemination grant. Further information about the federal Public Charter Schools Grant Program is available at www.uscharterschools.org, under "Federal Resources."

APPENDIX F

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY NETWORK

Charter schools across the country can receive assistance and guidance in accountability planning from the National Charter School Accountability Network. The Accountability Network is a consortium of state-level charter school support organizations focused on building the quality and accountability of charter schools nationwide. Currently connecting the efforts of 23 organizations in 17 states, the Accountability Network concentrates on three critical areas:

- Helping ***charter schools*** achieve and demonstrate genuine accountability for student learning, by developing comprehensive accountability systems that clearly align learning standards, curricula, assessments and public reporting mechanisms;

- Building the capacities of ***charter authorizers*** to execute their responsibilities well – granting charters to schools that are likely to succeed and holding schools accountable for student achievement rather than "process" uniformity; and

- Enabling ***charter support organizations*** (resource centers and charter school associations) nationwide to share lessons, effective practices, successful technical assistance programs, practical tools, and strong resources to strengthen school accountability.

The Accountability Network aims to help charter schools and charter authorizers develop well-aligned, comprehensive accountability systems and performance evaluation methods that can serve as replicable models of accountability for charters – and indeed, all public schools – nationwide. Overall coordination for the Accountability Network is provided by the Charter Friends National Network.

On the following pages is a contact directory for the charter support organizations participating in the National Charter School Accountability Network. These organizations can provide intensive assistance on accountability needs to charter schools in their respective states.

Further information about the Accountability Network is available at www.charterfriends.org/accountability/cfi-accountability4.html.

Arizona Charter Schools Association
Gary Richardson
480 775 6237
glrichardson@netzero.net

Arizona Charter School Resource Center
Mary Gifford
602 744 9600
mgifford@cmbe.org

Charter Schools Development Center (California)
Eric Premack and Laurie Gardner
916 278 4600
epremack@calstate.edu
lgardner@calstate.edu

Colorado League of Charter Schools
Jim Griffin
303 989 5356
james_griffin@together.cudenver.edu

District of Columbia Public Charter School Resource Center
Shirley Monastra
202 835 9011
smonastra@dccharttercenter.org

Florida Charter School Resource Center
Lyn Lavely
800 214 4247
mary@iirp.coedu.usf.edu

Leadership for Quality Education (Illinois)
John Ayers and Allison Jack
312 853 1206
jayers@LQE.org
ajack@LQE.org

Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center
Linda Brown
617 723 2277
lbrown@pioneerinstitute.org

Michigan Association of Public School Academies
Dan Quisenberry
517 374 9167
mapsa@charterschools.org

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools & the New Twin Cities Charter School Project
Steve Dess, MACS,
651 549 5470
stevedess@mncharterschools.org

Nancy Smith, NTCCSP
612 625 7552
nsmith@hhh.umn.edu

Missouri Charter Schools Information Center
Laura Friedman
314 726 6474
mocsic@aol.com

New Jersey Charter School Resource Center
Jim De Laney
973 621 6631
csrc@njsi.org

Center for Governmental Research (Rochester, NY)
Kent Gardner
716 327 7054
kgardner@cgr.org

New Visions Charter School Assistance Center (New York City)
Lydell Carter
212 645 5110
lydellc@newvisions.org

New York Charter School Resource Center
Gerry Vazquez
800 519 6362
nycharters@yahoo.com

North Carolina Charter School Resource Center
Thelma Glynn
888 461 8824
nccharter@aol.com

Ohio Community Schools Center
Clint Satow
614 224 2647
cfsatow@aol.com

Lucas County Community Schools Office (Ohio)
Peg Hull
419 246 3123
lc_mrh@nwoca.org

Dayton Alliance for Education (Ohio)
Tim Nealon
937 222 2934
tjnealon@earthlink.net

Charter Schools Project at Duquesne University (Pennsylvania)
Chenzie Grignano
412 396 4492
grignano@duq.edu

Charter School Resource Center of Texas
Patsy O'Neill
210 348 7890
oneillp@texas.net

Wisconsin Charter School Resource Center
Cindy Zautcke
414 288 1540
cindy.zautcke@marquette.edu

National Charter School Accountability Network (Coordination)
Margaret Lin
202 363 8434
margaret.lin@stanfordalumni.org

APPENDIX I

STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

Following is a partial list of resources (in no particular order) that charter school leaders and teachers may find helpful in developing strong educational accountability plans aligned with their particular school missions. Many of these resources have been used and recommended by Chicago's Standards & Assessment Project demonstration schools.

This resource list is available online, with hotlinks to all websites listed, on the "Accountability" page of the Charter Friends National Network website, **http://www.charterfriends.org**.

An extensive, complementary library of resources on accountability, standards, assessment, and use of student performance data is available on the U.S. Department of Education's charter schools website, **http://www.uscharterschools.org/tech_assist/res_account.htm**.

I. ONLINE RESOURCES

Content Knowledge, a Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, by John Kendall and Thomas Marzano, catalogs nearly 250 highly regarded national, state, district, and other academic standards and related benchmarks in 11 major disciplines (ranging from math to language arts to "life skills"). It appears to borrow heavily from the major national-level standards setting efforts in many subject areas, while only briefly referencing state-level efforts. Part of this compendium is available at **www.mcrel.org**.

The Council for Basic Education, www.c-b-e.org, (202) 347-4171, is a resource for educators and policymakers advocating high academic standards and a strong K-12 liberal arts education for all children in the nation's schools. CBE's website contains links to dozens of resources on academic standards. Among CBE's many publications is a multimedia kit, Standards for Excellence in Education: *A Guide for Parents, Teachers, and Principals for Evaluating and Implementing Standards in Education,* designed to help teachers, parents, administrators, community leaders, and public officials assess and implement high academic standards to improve education. Integrating several states' and national organizations' K-12 standards for the arts, civics, English language arts, foreign languages, geography, history, mathematics, and science, this kit helps readers ask critical questions about what students are learning and should learn. Available on CD, it includes separate booklets for teachers,

parents, and principals, and lists numerous resources for understanding and developing standards. Kits may be ordered from 1-800-933-2723 (the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development).

The Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory, www.mcrel.org/standards, provides an award-winning education website with links to an extensive array of standards based education documents and resources in both traditional and non-traditional curricular areas.

The Putnam Valley (New York) School District's Standards Website, www.putwest.boces.org, offers many state and national standards documents and resources. The site is indexed by governmental and general resources, and standards and frameworks documents are listed by subject area and by state.

The U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools Website, www.uscharterschools.org, provides access to state and national standards, as well as extensive links relating to learning standards and goal-setting, assessment, and use of student performance data.

The New Standards Project, www.ncee.org/ourprograms/nspage.html, offers a comprehensive set of internationally benchmarked performance standards and an aligned assessment system (including reference examinations, performance tasks, and portfolio instruments) in mathematics, English language arts, science and applied learning at the elementary, middle and high school levels. A joint project of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) and the Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC) at the University of Pittsburgh.

The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, www.edexcellence.net, publishes reviews and rankings of state level standards in five "core" subjects – English, history, geography, math, and science. The rankings reports are available on the Web, and single copies may also be ordered at no charge by calling 1-888-TBF-7474.

The American Federation of Teachers, www.aft.org/edissues/standards99/states/index.htm, offers state by state reviews and ratings of state standards and assessments in core subjects.

The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), www.essentialschools.org, pioneered much of the work in alternative assessment. This site covers essential elements of portfolio exhibitions and how to get started with digital portfolios.

The Standards Clearinghouse by Achieve, Inc., www.achieve.org Achieve, Inc. is a nonprofit organization created by America's governors and corporate leaders to provide advice and assistance to states on education reform and school accountability. Achieve's Standards Clearinghouse organizes academic standards in mathematics, English/language arts, science history, and social science state by state, grade level by grade level, and subject by subject. Achieve organized the state standards using a structure developed by McREL in *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education*. This site is a tool for researching and comparing state-mandated academic standards and assessments. Currently, the site includes state standards and samples of student work. The Standards Clearinghouse is also developing sample assessment questions, student work with scoring comments, and information on accountability measures, professional development programs, and other state policies.

The Work Sampling System, http://ericae.net/edo/ED382407.htm, is a curriculum-embedded performance assessment system developed at the University of Michigan, designed to assess and document the skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments of children ages 3 – 11 in a variety of education domains. The Work Sampling System systematizes teacher observations by guiding those observations with specific criteria and well-defined procedures. It consists of three complementary components: (1) Developmental Guidelines and Checklists, (2) Portfolios, and (3) Summary Reports. Classroom based and instructionally relevant, these components involve the child, the child's family, the teacher, and the school administration in the processes of assessment. Explanatory materials are available from Rebus, Inc., at 1-800-435-3085.

The National Writing Project, http://nwp.berkeley.edu, is an extensive professional development network of teachers (operating through 165 sites in 48 states) focused on promoting exemplary instruction of writing throughout America's classrooms. Provides resources to support the development and use of strong writing standards and assessments.

Mt. Holyoke College - Speaking, Arguing and Writing Program, www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/programs/wcl, (413) 538-3028 The Speaking, Arguing and Writing (SAW) Program teaches Mt. Holyoke College students to speak, argue and write effectively and persuasively. The SAW Program can also serve as a resource for high schools by sharing educational materials and providing the opportunity for teachers to observe the college program in action.

The New York Times Learning Network, www.nytimes.com/learning, contains helpful resources for teachers, such as an archive of daily lesson plans that are aligned with McREL's national content standards and benchmarks.

The Pioneer Institute, www.pioneerinstitute.org, website contains an overview of student performance and accountability oversight practices.

Performance Assessment Collaborative for Education (PACE), http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~PACE, (617)496-2770 (Website is being updated)

Project Zero (Harvard University), http://pz.harvard.edu, (617)495-4342 Research project focusing on "innovative methods of assessment that evaluate different forms of student thinking, not just linguistic and mathematical skills. These methods, which include projects, portfolios and video portfolios, probe students' abilities to use information flexibly and appropriately in real-life situations."

Boston College Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation, and Education Policy, www.csteep.bc.edu, (617) 552-4521 Research organization that works with individual schools, districts, states and countries to advance educational testing practices and policies based on multiple modes of assessment. Research projects include the Consortium for Equity in Standards and Testing, www.csteep.bc.edu/CTESTWEB/start.html, which focuses on the design, implementation and dissemination of challenging and fair tests and standards designed to "identify and nurture talent, especially among racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities."

The International Society of Technology in Education, www.iste.org, describes the National Academic Standards in Technology for students in the 2nd, 5th, 8th and 12th grades.

The National Assessment Governing Board, www.nagb.org, (202) 357-6938 Provides information about national tests such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress NAEP) and the voluntary national test (VNT).

International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment Center, www.ibo.org, (212) 696-4464 International assessment strategy that includes a variety of methods, including conventional external examination techniques as well as internal assessment of coursework, with classroom teachers and international examiners working in partnership to evaluate student achievement.

National Association of Independent Schools Accreditation Standards, www.nais.org, (202) 973-9700 Provides accreditation standards used to determine schools' eligibility for NAIS membership.

National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/index.htm Provides current research reports, assessment information for parents, and additional links related to student testing.

ERIC-Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation, www.ericae.net. Provides a wealth of information, links, and resources related to educational assessment.

Vermont Department of Education, www.state.vt.us/educ/APdata Offers a school-directed, step-by-step "Action Planning Guide" to help schools use student performance data to achieve continuous school improvement, working toward both equity and excellence. Defines and explains key terms and considerations in analyzing student achievement data, such as the use of different types of assessments (e.g., standards based, criterion-referenced, norm referenced, portfolio). Most of the site's content is useful for schools in any state.

Accountability for Student Performance: An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School, www.charterfriends.org/performance.html (651) 649-5479 This resource guide, drafted by several charter school resource centers in 1998 and distributed by the Charter Friends National Network, builds upon a six point framework for developing charter school accountability plans. Includes resources for implementing the framework suggested. Also available in hard copy from the Charter Friends National Network at the number above.

GOTSchool, Inc. (Great Online Tools for Schools), www.gotschool.com An online gateway to reviewed resources on standards and assessment for schools.

Curriculum Designer, www.edvision.com Curriculum Designer is a software tool that aligns school curricula to state and district standards.

Teachmaster, www.teachmaster.com Provides individual state standards and benchmarks on a single CD-ROM.

Explorasource, www.explorasource.com An online service that finds resources to match specific learning needs and education standards.

Scholastic, Inc. http://teacher.scholastic.com/ilp/index.asp Provides standards-based resources and curricula.

StateStandards.com, http://www.statestandards.com/ Provides lesson plans correlated to educational standards for all states.

PBS TeacherSource, www.pbs.org/teachersource/search.htm Offers language arts, history, math, social studies, and health & fitness lessons correlated to over 90 sets of national and state curriculum standards.

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators, http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/assess.html Lists resources for developing performance-based assessment rubrics.

Chicago Public Schools, http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_and_Rubrics/ideas_and_rubrics.html Provides ideas and examples to help design and evaluate performance assessments.

Rubrics for Web Lessons, http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubrics_for_Web_Lessons.html Offers online professional development for learning about creating rubrics.

II. STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT RESOURCES IN SOME NON-TRADITIONAL SUBJECT AREAS

"Standards-Based Assessment for ESOL Students" by Anne Katz in the Spring/Summer 1999 ERIC/CLL Newsbulletin **www.cal.org/ericcll/News/199903/main.html,** highlights a framework for assessing English language learners and using the data collected through this assessment process to make decisions that will enhance student learning. The work is part of an ongoing ESL standards and assessment project sponsored by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

National Association for Music Education (MENC), www.menc.org Provides national standards and assessment strategies for music and arts education. One helpful publication is "National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts."

Arts Education Standards and Assessment - The Galef Institute, www.dwoknet.galef.org, (800) 473-8883 The Galef Institute is a nonprofit educational organization spearheading a comprehensive school reform initiative called Different Ways of Knowing (DWOK). Provides a forum for discussion and specific examples of curriculum, projects, and assessments linked to state and national student performance standards in the arts.

Getty Education Institute for the Arts, www.artsednet.getty.edu, (310) 440-7315 Provides performance assessments and rubrics and national visual arts content standards.

Kennedy Center's ArtsEdge, http://artsedge.kennedycenter.org/artsedge.html Provides a forum for discussion and a variety of arts education information, resources, and ideas to help artists, teachers, and students integrate the arts as [illegible]re subject area in K-12 curriculum.

Center for Critical Thinking Faculty Resource Center, www.criticalthinking.org
Provides a wealth of information to help educators implement critical thinking throughout their curriculum, including assessment resources and links to the Center for Critical Thinking, Foundation for Critical Thinking, International Center for the Assessment of Higher Order Thinking, and the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking.

Character Education:

UIC College of Education, www.uic.edu/Elnucci/MoralEd/ Site hosted by the College of Education, University of Illinois at Chicago. Provides information and links to dozens of resources for character education.

The Character Education Partnership, www.character.org/ The Character Education Partnership (CEP) is a nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to developing moral character and civic virtue in our nation's youth as one means of creating a more compassionate and responsible society.

Media Literacy, www.med.sc.edu:81/medialit Site hosted by a media literacy project of the University of South Carolina and endorsed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Assesses and provides links to media literacy education goals contained in 48 state curricular frameworks, and offers resources to help teachers integrate media literacy into classroom instruction.

Computer Literacy/Technology, www.mcrel.org/standards benchmarks/standslib/technlgy.html

Behavioral Studies, www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/standslib/behav.html

Life Skills, www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/standslib/lifeskll.html. Provides learning standards in skill areas such as collaboration, negotiation, and problem solving.

Note: Standards and benchmarks in many other areas of learning are available at ***www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks.***

III. GENERAL PUBLICATIONS ON STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLANNING

Following are several publications that can help schools strengthen their accountability planning.

Charter School Accountability Action Guide, by Jennifer Nahas and Roblyn Anderson Brigham and published by the Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, is a concise, practical guide for educators. Provides a six-step "recipe" for building a school-wide academic accountability system that enables school faculty to (1) collect, analyze and understand both "hard" and "soft" data on student learning to inform instructional practices, and (2) communicate such information to the school community, chartering agency, and broader public. A must-read for charter school developers and operators. Available at no charge from the Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, 617/723-2277 and at **www.pioneerinstitute.org**.

"Navigating Through the Standards Maze," Chapter 1 in *A Comprehensive, Practical Guide to Holding Charter Schools Accountable* by Laurie Gardner, available at no charge from the Charter Schools Development Center, 916/278-6069 and at **www.cacharterschools.org.** Contains some information specific to California, but also provides key advice and guidance useful to charter developers nationally.

Raising the Standard, by Denis Doyle and Susan Pimentel. This book is a primer for both school districts and schools in establishing concrete learning standards. It also contains brief information on assessment and accountability matters, as well as a CD-ROM disk containing examples of standards and standards-setting. To order, call Corwin Press at 805/499-9774.

A Comprehensive Guide to Designing Standards-Based Districts, Schools, and Classrooms, by Robert Marzano and John Kendall, published by the Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). To order, go to **www.ascd.org** (click on "ASCD Online Store").

"Interpreting the Types of Scores" and **"Value Added"** are two brief publications providing concise definitions and explanations of essential concepts in interpreting and wisely using standardized test data, particularly the Stanford-9 Achievement Test. Distributed to charter schools in Arizona by the Arizona Charter School Resource Center, and available at no charge from the Charter Friends National Network, 651/649-5479.

At Your Fingertips is a practical six-step (250-page) workbook and guide to assist schools in selecting, analyzing, using, and presenting student performance data to raise achievement. It shows its users how to evaluate the quality and utility of both current and prospective data. It also offers educators suggestions on how to clearly communicate important findings to colleagues and constituents. Further information (including ordering information) about the guide can be found at **www.mprinc.com/html/resources/ayf_brochure_main.htm**

"The Quality of Intellectual Work in Chicago's Public Schools: A Baseline Report," by Fred M. Newmann, Gudelia Lopez, and Anthony S. Bryk, published by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (October 1998). May be ordered from **www.consortium-chicago.org.**

You Gotta BE the Book, by Jeffrey Wilhelm. Develops a theory of reading grounded in the actual experiences of students that stresses the visual dimensions of reading. Particularly helpful for educators creating literacy – related standards and assessments.

CHICAGO'S DEMONSTRATION CHARTER SCHOOLS

Below is contact information for the schools featured in this booklet. Descriptive portraits of each school are available on Leadership for Quality Education's website, www.lqe.org.

North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School
Dr. Marv Hoffman and Dr. Barbara Williams, Directors
1119 E. 46th Street, Chicago, IL 60653
773/536-2399, 773/536-2435 fax

North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School
Robert Durrah, Principal
John Horan, School Dean
1616 S. Spaulding Avenue, Chicago, IL 60623
773/542-1490, 773/542-1492 fax

Perspectives Charter School
Kimberlie Day & Diana Shulla, Co-Directors
1532 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605
312/431-8770, 312/431-8843 fax

Triumphant Charter School
Helen Stanton Hawkins, Head of School
Thomas Ivey, Assistant Head of School
4953 S. Seeley, Chicago, IL 60643
773/918-0766, 773/918-1531 fax

CO-SPONSORS OF CHICAGO'S CHARTER SCHOOL STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT PROJECT

The Charter Schools Office of the Chicago Public Schools supports, oversees, and evaluates Chicago's charter schools. The office is a resource for parents, school officials, the media, policymakers, and the charter schools themselves.

Contact:
Greg Richmond
Director, Charter Schools Office
Chicago Public Schools
125 S. Clark Street, 12th Floor, Chicago, IL 60603
773/553-1535
grichmond@csc.cps.k12.il.us

Leadership for Quality Education (LQE), the education arm of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, leads the efforts of Chicago's senior business community in supporting improvement in the Chicago Public Schools. Since 1996, LQE has helped to lead the development of high-quality charter schools in Chicago and the surrounding metropolitan region.

Contact:
John Ayers, Executive Director
Allison Jack, Director, Charter School Resource Center
Leadership for Quality Education
21 S. Clark Street, Suite 3120, Chicago, IL 60603
312/853-1206
jayers@LQE.org, ajack@LQE.org
www.LQE.org

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margaret Lin is a consultant who focuses on strengthening charter school accountability and governance across the country. Based in Washington, DC, she co-founded and manages the National Charter School Accountability Network, a nationwide collaborative of state-level charter school support organizations working to strengthen accountability planning and practices among charter schools and charter-authorizing agencies.

Ms. Lin serves as a resource for charter school assistance organizations charter-authorizing agencies, charter schools, and educational foundations in numerous states. She is co-author of *Charting a Clear Course: A Resource Guide for Building Successful Partnerships Between Charter Schools and School Management Organizations* (Charter Friends National Network, 2nd edition, 2000).

Previously, Ms. Lin co-founded and managed the Charter School Resource Center at Leadership for Quality Education, a school reform organization in Chicago that has provided critical support to the development of charter schools in Chicago and throughout Illinois. Ms. Lin was a Rotary Foundation Scholar in Brussels, Belgium and has taught all levels of English and cross-cultural courses at public schools, private corporations, and international agencies in Tokyo, Japan. She holds a B.A. from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and a J.D. from Stanford Law School.

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